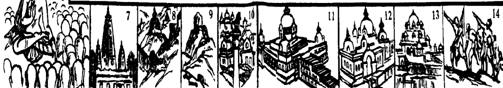
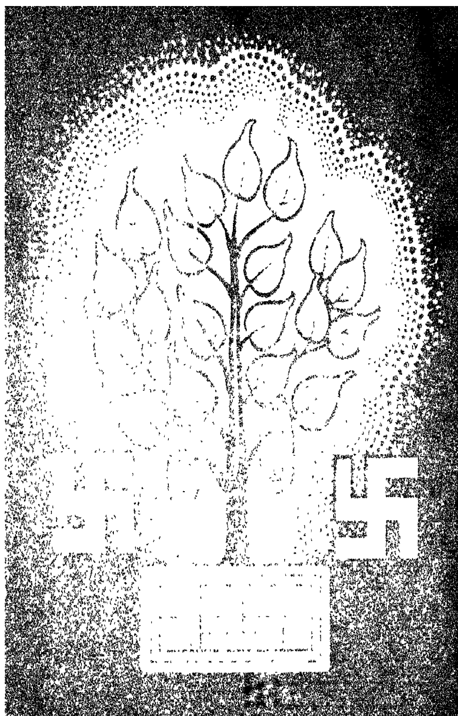


1. Kailash
2. Gangabataran
3. Rama Dhanu Bhanga
4. Jarasandha
5. Mahavir
6. Buddha
7. Bodh Gaya
8. Raj Grihas
9. Lumbini
10. Vaisali
11. Nalanda
12. Vikrama Sila
13. Sher Shah's Tomb
14. Martyrs' Memorial (1942)

Kashgar
Yarkand
Gilgit
Khotan
Gandhara
Bamian
Hadda
Srinagar
Turfan
Charchan
Tunh Hoang
Peking
Korea
Kyoto
Nara
Horyuji
Shikoku
Kyushu
Japan
Nanking
Lhasa
Sravasti
Delhi
Kapilavastu
Mathura
Kusinagara
Vaisali
Sarnath
Benares
Pataliputra
Bharut
Sanchi
Nalanda
Rajgir
Bodh Gaya
Calcutta
Nasik
Ajanta
Ellora
Bombay
Karli
Amaravati
Badami
Madras
Anuradhapura
ARABIAN SEA
INDIAN OCEAN
Formosa
Pagan
Chiangmai
Pegu
Sukhotai
Thaton
Rangoon
Lopburi
Bangkok
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Saigon
SOUTH CHINA
Philippines
Mindanao
Borneo
Celebes
Sumatra
Palembang
Java
Madjapahit
Borobudur



BIHAR THROUGH THE AGES





OUTSKIRTS OF VAIŚĀLĪ   Lichchhavi Princes, Buddha and Ānanda

BUDDHA ON THE VIJJIAN REPUBLICS

(Buddha's dialogue with Ānanda on the outskirts of Vaiśāli, in the presence of some Lichhavi princes)

And the Blessed One said to him 'Have you heard, Ānanda, that the Vijjians (Confederacy of Republics at Vaiśāli) hold full and frequent public assemblies?'

'Lord, so I have heard', replied he

'So long, Ānanda', rejoined the Blessed One, 'as the Vijjians hold these full and frequent public assemblies, so long may they be expected not *to decline, but to prosper'*

(And in the like manner questioning Ānanda, and receiving a similar reply, the Blessed One declared as follows the other conditions which would ensure the welfare of the Vijjian confederacy)

'So long, Ānanda, as the Vijjians meet together in concord, and rise in concord and carry out their undertakings in concord — so long as they enact nothing not already established, abrogate nothing that has been already enacted, and act in accordance with the ancient institutions of the Vijjians as established in former days — so long as they honour and esteem and revere and support the Vijjian elders, and deem it a point of duty to hearken to their words — so long as no women or girls belonging to their clans are detained among them by force or abduction — so long as they honour and esteem and revere and support the Vijjian shrines in town or country and allow not the proper offerings and rites, as formerly given and performed to fall into desuetude — so long as the rightful protection, defence, and support shall be fully provided for the Arahats among them, so that Arahats from a distance may enter the realm, and the Arahats therein may live at ease — so long may the Vijjians be expected not *to decline, but to prosper'*

Then the Blessed One addressed Vassākara the Brāhman, and said

'When I was once staying, O Brāhman, at Vaiśāli at the Sārandada Temple, I taught the Vijjians these conditions of welfare, and so long as these conditions shall continue to exist among the Vijjians, so long as the Vijjians shall be well instructed in those conditions, so long may we expect them not *to decline, but to prosper'*

From the Mahāparinibbāna Suttam (in Pali), ch I of the Digha Nikāya (Part II) edited by Prof N K. Bhagwat, M.A (Bombay, 1936), pp 60-62

English translation from the Sacred Books of the East, Vol XI translated by Mr T W Rhys Davids (Oxford, 1900), pp 3-4, also available in 'Dialogues of the Buddha', Part II, translated by Messrs T W and C A.F Rhys Davids (London 1910), pp 79-80

BIHAR THROUGH THE AGES

R. R. DIWAKAR
GENERAL EDITOR

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TO
THE PEOPLE OF BIHAR

MESSAGE BY DR RAJENDRA PRASAD



PRESIDENT'S CAMP
INDIA

"Bihar Through the Ages" is an attempt to narrate the story of the people of Bihar in a brief and simple manner. While the political and administrative aspects are dealt with, the main emphasis in this book is laid on how the life of the people flowed in the economic, social, literary, artistic and aesthetic channels during about three thousand years.

It is a fascinating story. While Bihar is the land of Janaka, Yagnavalkya and Gautama, it is also the land of Mahavira and Buddha, of Chandragupta and Chanakya, of Asoka and the Gupta Emperors. From Videha, Magadha and Anga — ancient names of important parts of modern Bihar — radiated for centuries not only to all parts of India but also to distant regions of Asia, religion, philosophy, arts and all that stands for culture and civilised life. It is no exaggeration to say that for centuries the history of India was but the history of Bihar writ large."

In recent times too modern Bihar has responded splendidly to the call of Mahatma Gandhi and Vinobaji. It is praiseworthy that about thirty scholars and artists from Bihar and other States have cooperated in this noble attempt to portray the life of a whole people and made it into a most interesting and



PRESIDENT'S CAMP,
INDIA.

and readable work.

I welcome most heartily this worthy attempt and commend this book to all who are interested in the story of a people who have made their humble contribution to history and would fain continue to do so.

Rajendra Prasad
9th June, 1957

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9th June, 1957

FOREWORD

SHRI R. R. DIWAKAR, when he was functioning as Governor of Bihar, told me of his intention to bring out a book on Bihar to be called 'Bihar Through the Ages'. I liked the idea and encouraged him to do so. It is gratifying to see that he has been able to edit and bring out the book with the help and co-operation of eminent scholars. Such a book, giving a broad survey of the State of Bihar from various points of view, can be of very considerable help. Indeed, I think that it would be a good thing if other States also had such surveys made.

In the old days we had various gazetteers which, in spite of deficiencies, were helpful. These gazetteers have become quite out of date, and a district is too small an area for any such survey. The whole problem had to be approached afresh from the proper point of view as well as for a much larger area, which now can only be a State.

This is what Shri R. R. Diwakar has done; and not only the people of Bihar, but many others in the rest of India should feel grateful to him for this labour of love. I have not had the advantage of reading through the manuscript, but I have seen some parts of it in proof sheets. This has indicated how comprehensive the book is.

I hope that many people will profit by reading this book.

DARJEELING,
25 December 1957

Jawaharlal Nehru

GENERAL EDITOR'S NOTE

I MAY utilize this occasion to express my deep sense of humility while presenting this work to the people, to take the reader into my confidence and to thank those who have helped me in the speedy execution of this work.

I first conceived the plan for the publication of *Bihar Through the Ages* as long ago as December 1954. The nature and scope of the work was somewhat different from those of books on general history. It may be said that the actual work began after discussions in a meeting (19 July 1955) at Ranchi, in which, among others, Shri K. B. Sahay, the then Revenue Minister, and Shri M. P. Sinha, the then Information Minister, Dr A. S. Altekar, Dr K. K. Datta, Shri K. K. Saran, Deputy Secretary, Education Department, Shri P. C. Roy Choudhury and Shri L. P. Singh, the then Chief Secretary, Bihar, were present. A sub-committee consisting of the Secretary, Education Department, Dr A. S. Altekar and Dr K. K. Datta with myself as the Chairman and General Editor, was formed for the execution of the plan. An elaborate synopsis was drawn up and it was decided to invite well-known scholars in Bihar and outside, to contribute to the work. The actual writing of the book may be said to have started with the arrival of the first manuscript on 24 April 1956.

As the work proceeded, it was found that sometimes very little or almost no material was available in connection with some periods, especially the medieval one, and also some subjects. Nothing daunted, the scholars tried to collect as much material as was available and possible, and in most cases, submitted their contributions almost in record time. It was this promptness on their part and their readiness to co-operate with me that made my work as General Editor far more easy. I had to do my part in a somewhat exacting manner as I had to attend to uniformity of language, to proper proportion and length of articles according to importance of the subjects, to linking up of chapters and sections, and by and large, to see that there was

a unity of impression within the limited number of pages which we had prescribed for ourselves. All this sometimes involved writing or rewriting several pages. I must confess that the work was very trying and even tiring; but at the same time I must say that it was always interesting and assuring, since I knew that I carried with me the full confidence of all the writers.

In the editing of the whole work, I must specially acknowledge the sincere and whole-hearted assistance of Dr A. S. Altekar and Dr K. K. Datta. Next to them, those who helped me in editing were Dr R. S. Sharma (ancient period), Prof. S. H. Askari (medieval period), and Prof. Sachchidananda (modern period). However, as General Editor I must bear the entire responsibility of editing the book as it has emerged finally in the present form.

Here I must add that Shri R.S. Rao, Shrimati Rukmini Gadagkar, Prof. A. N. Banerjee, Shri. J. S. Jha and Shri A. C. Mukherji have helped me generally in various ways in editing the book.

From the very beginning, we were clear in our minds that the book was to be written for the general reader. Therefore, controversies which would have been confusing, and footnotes which would have been cumbersome, have been avoided. For those who would like to study the subjects more deeply, a somewhat exhaustive bibliography has been provided at the end. A glossary also has been given for the convenience of readers.

Before I take up the very pleasant task of acknowledging the help of all those who have contributed to the success of this somewhat arduous undertaking, I must thank most heartily Dr S. K. Sinha, the scholarly Chief Minister of Bihar, for having appreciated the plan and agreed to sponsor the publication, on behalf of the Government of Bihar.

I am profoundly indebted to Dr Rajendra Prasad, our beloved President, for blessing this effort by a special message in his own handwriting.

There are no words which I can find to thank Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who encouraged me in this work almost from the beginning and agreed, in spite of his heavy preoccupations, to write a foreword for this book.

I have very great pleasure in acknowledging the valuable contributions of the following scholars to this book:—

Prof. A. A. ORAINVI, Head of the Department of Urdu, Patna University.
Prof. A. F. HAIDER, Department of Persian, Patna University.
Prof. A. S. ALTEKAR, Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Patna University.
Prof. A. MANNAN, Department of Persian, Patna University.
Dr. B. B. MISRA, Director of State Archives, Patna.
Dr. B. P. SINHA, Reader, Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Patna University.
Dr. BISHWANATH PRASAD, Head of the Department of Hindi, Patna University.
Dr. BASUDEVA UPADHYAYA, Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Patna University.
Prof. H. M. JHA, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Patna University.
Dr. H. L. JAIN, Director, Vaishali Institute of Jainology and Ahimsa.
Dr. H. R. GHOSAL, Department of History, L.S. College, Muzaffarpur.
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Dr. K. K. BASU, Head of the Department of History, T.N.J. College, Bhagalpur.
Dr. K. K. DATTA, Head of the Department of History, Patna University.
Shri KRISHNADEVA, Superintendent of Archæology, Bhopal.
Shri L. P. SINGH, I.C.S., Special Officer, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
Prof. N. V. SHARMA, Department of Hindi, Patna University.
Dr. P. DAYAL, Head of the Department of Geography, Patna University.
Dr. P. L. VAIDYA, Director, Mithila Sanskrit Institute, Darbhanga.
Shri RADHA MOHAN, Principal, Government School of Art, Patna
Shri RANCHOR PRASAD, I.A.S., Secretary to Government, Development Department, Bihar.
Dr. R. C. MAZUMDAR, Professor of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Nagpur University.
Dr. S. C. CHATTERJEE, Head of the Department of Geology, Patna University.
Prof. S. H. ASKARI, Professor of History, Patna College.

Prof. Sachchidananda, Head of the Department of Anthropology, Ranchi College.

Prof. S. K. Saraswati, Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University.

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Shri Sivapujan Sahay, Secretary, Rashtrabhasha Parishad, Patna.

Dr. S. Mukherjee, Director, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda.

Dr. Sudhakar Jha, Head of the Department of Maithili, Patna University.

Dr. Sukumar Sen, Head of the Department of Bengali, Calcutta University.

Dr. T. P. Chowdhury, Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Patna University.

Shri Upendra Maharathi, Director, Institute of Industrial Design, Patna, Bihar.

As regards maps and pictographs, I am indebted to Shri Ranchhor Prasad, I.A.S., Secretary to Government, Development Department, Bihar, and to Shri N. C. Bole, Regional Planning Officer, Development Commissioner's Department, Bihar, both of whom took special pains to draw maps which were needed for this book.

Special thanks are due to the following for the supply of photographs and drawings which were required for illustrating the work:—

Department of Archæology, Central Government, New Delhi.

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Golden Jubilee Commemoration Number: Acharya Ramlochan Saran (who also supplied two blocks), Darbhanga.

Central Asian Antiquities Museum, New Delhi,

Dr A. S. Altekar, Patna.

Dr K. K. Datta, Patna.
Prof. S. H. Askari, Patna.

I am highly obliged to Shri Upendra Maharathi for the painting of 'Outskirts of Vaiśālī: Lichchavi Princes, Buddha and Ānanda', which he did specially for this book. My thanks are due to him also for the cover design, the endpapers of the covers, the tail-pieces and so on.

I have the privilege and pleasure to record my grateful thanks here to Dr. Zakir Hussain, my successor and the present Governor of Bihar, who has evinced very great interest in the publications of this book, since his taking office.

Last but not least, Messrs Orient Longmans Private Ltd. of Calcutta deserve all the thanks that I can give them for taking very keen interest from the very beginning and for putting forth their full effort to bring out the book in as neat a form as possible and as quickly also.

I have nothing but ample thanks for Lt.-Col. C. S. Bhatnagar, my Secretary, and his subordinates in the office, who have toiled hard and often beyond their time and capacity to expedite the production of this work.

I have only to add that there have been so many who have shared the burden with me that it is likely I have not mentioned all their names. To them too are my thanks due in no lesser degree.

But more than any thanks or acknowledgements, I am sure that the participants will have the satisfaction of having taken part in the production of a work which was worthy of one's effort.

BANGALORE GENERAL EDITOR
1. 11. 1958

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Following p. 820

MAPS

CORRIGENDUM

Page 505, line 27 for : *Gazallers* read *Gazelleers* and omit (*Gazal writers*)

KEY TO TRANSLITERATIONS

Diacritical marks have been followed as in Dr Altekar's book entitled *Catalogue of the Gupta Gold Coins in the Bayana Hoard.*

आ	ā	ट्	ṭ
ई	ī	ठ्	ṭh
ऊ	ū	ड	ḍ
ऋ	ṛi	ढ	ḍh
औ	au	ण्	ṇ
ङ्	ṅ	श	ś
च	ch	ष	sh
छ्	chh	ञ्	jñ

CALENDARS

1. VIKRAM SAMVAT A.D. +56
2. SHALIVAHAN ŚAKA A.D. −78
3. BENGALI YEAR A.D. −594
4. HIJRI, MUSLIM A.D. −581

ABBREVIATIONS

Note:—Equivalents are given only of abbreviations which are not very common

A.H.	The Muslim calendar year.
Arth.	*Arthashastra.*
b.	Born.
B C.	Before Christ.
B.N.R.	Bengal Nagpur Railway.
B.N.W.R.	Bengal and North-Western Railway.
Brih.	*Brihadaranyaka.*
c.	*Circa*, about.
d.	Died.
D H	Dark half of the month.
D.V.C.	Damodar Valley Corporation.
E.	East.
E.I.R.	East Indian Railway.
Geo.	Statute (Law) of Fort St George.
H.	Hijri, the Muslim calendar year.
J B.R.S.	Journal of Bengal Royal Society
J B.O.R.S.	Journal of Bihar and Orissa Royal Society.
J.A.S.B.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
L. H.	Light half of the month.
N.E.S.	National Extension Service.
N.C.C.	National Cadet Corps.
A.B.C. Provinces	Provinces classified as A, B, or C according as they were full-fledged provinces, or states under princes, or centrally administered provinces.
Rig.	*Rigveda.*
U.P.	United Provinces, now known as Uttar Pradesh.
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
WHO	World Health Organization.

INTRODUCTION

FOR ages, history has only meant a succession mostly of political events and a story of kings and dynasties who were supposed to be responsible for those events. Recently, however, the science of history has developed a far broader outlook. Instead of focussing its attention on politicians and statesmen, warriors and diplomats, history is trying to interpret events and the development of culture in terms of the forces working in the respective social groupings. This does not mean that the importance of the actors on the stage of history has in any way diminished. The heroes of history have their own appeal to readers as persons with some particular powers and ability. Historians however, while giving great individuals their due, have begun to think in terms of the causes, economic and social, that move masses of men to action in different fields of social endeavour. They are now giving greater importance to the elemental urges.

Bihar Through the Ages does not attempt so deep a probe into the forces that have been acting in this part of the country. Probably, as a preliminary step, far more material presented in a classified manner may be necessary for taking up that task. But certainly this attempt here has made one departure. Instead of giving prominence and concentrating on the political history and administration of this area, it has taken care to give far more space and importance to the running story of the socio-economic and religio-aesthetic activities of the people inhabiting Bihar.

When I came to Bihar about six years ago, I was naturally anxious to know everything about Bihar, its people and their doings in the past and the present. I knew, no doubt, something about the great, heroic, religious and other mighty figures that have played their noble part in the history of Bihar and have deservedly occupied a very prominent place in the history of India, and sometimes even in the history of the world. But to my disappointment, I found that it was not possible to get all the information that I wanted about

the people of this state in one place and in the form of a continuous story, spotlighting the important features of the land and its people. I therefore thought of planning a book in which a general reader can find what he wants to know and what is worth knowing about the whole State and its people. I am glad to say that this plan was welcomed whole-heartedly by Dr S. K. Sinha, and scholars came forward most willingly to lend a helping hand.

I thought that the objective of such a publication should be to acquaint every Bihari with the story of the whole past of the people of Bihar, and at the same time be able to convey to all others a panoramic view of Bihar and its people, and what they have been doing during the last three millenia. It is difficult for me to say whether this objective has been completely fulfilled. But I can certainly say, that with the time at their disposal and with the material that was available, the dozens of scholars that have contributed to this work have tried to present an unbroken story of the people of Bihar, giving more prominence to their social, economic, and cultural life.

There is no doubt that the whole of India has always presented itself, both to Indians as well as to outsiders, as an integral whole. Whatever the diversities of race, religion, language, customs and manners, there has always reigned supreme a fundamental unity which made people think of the whole of India as one entity with one psyche or personality. To use a familiar term, India has 'a genius' of her own and India's culture has been continuous, vital, and even now creative in the various fields of human activity. During its long history, India has had some invaders from outside who tried to impose their own culture on her. India had internal schisms as well. She is also noted for a number of empires, which sometimes extended to the limits of the whole of India and at other times only to certain big portions of it. But in spite of these political and other vicissitudes, what has persisted like the mighty river Ganges, is the silken thread of Indian culture which is still binding the varied people of the whole of India, from Kashmir to Cape Comorin and from Cutch to Assam. This thread has been unbroken and has been persistent, but for the fateful partition which has sought to build a separate culture in a part that was India but eleven years ago.

While what I have said above is true of the whole of India, it is equally true that the people living in different regions of India have certain characteristics which mark them off from the people in the neighbouring regions of the country. All these peoples have enriched

Indian culture by certain peculiarities and contributions of their own. While, therefore, it would be pretentious and unreal to speak in terms of Bihar history and Bihar culture or Tamil history and Tamil culture, as separate from and independent of Indian history and Indian culture, it is certainly realistic and very helpful to know what part these people, differing and yet one with the whole of India, have played in their own way in history, and at the same time contributed certain strains and characteristics to Indian culture as a whole. In fact, there are no provincial cultures or linguistic cultures as such, separate and different from Indian culture. At the same time, it is true that the contribution of these different regions can be distinctly marked and traced and their contribution to Indian culture recognized and appreciated.

This book, therefore, is trying to play the humble part of pointing out that on the mighty and brilliant canvas of a vast and varied India, Bihar too has added some colour of its own which is in tune with the eternal tradition of India's Dharma, and has thus justified its own existence. It is often said that 'unity in diversity' is the key to the understanding of the huge country that India certainly is. But this unity and diversity are inseparable and inextricable. If anyone tries to think in terms of his own region or his own language in India as separate from and irrespective of its connections with India as a whole, I think he is trying the impossible. It is like trying to cut the very tap-root that carries the vital sap to the other roots and branches of the same tree. As in the past, even today and also in the future, continuity, security and prosperity of every part of India, every people of India along with their language and culture, depend entirely upon the unity of the whole of India and upon the emotional as well as rational realization that the interests of all peoples in India are one and indivisible.

It is true that the day is fast coming when we must think in terms of human culture as a whole rather than any national or regional culture in isolation. But even then, it is necessary to understand how and in what way these regional cultures are related to each other and correlated with one global human culture. It is only from that point of view that we look upon Indian culture as one entity, while peculiarities as manifested in different regions are but tributaries to the single stream of her culture. It is only this perspective which can save us not only from parochialism but also from ignorance and

prejudice. This outlook alone can enable us to view things in their true relationship.

Bihar Through the Ages naturally deals much more with the past story of Bihar than with the present happenings. In fact, the story has been brought only up to 1947. What has been added on is only an indicative outline rather than the treatment of the subject, since we are all so familiar with it. This need not lead anyone to think that the past should be given greater importance than it deserves. The past, of course, is with us and we must know it if we have to live in the present and also to carry ourselves on to the future. In fact, the past, present and future are a single stream of time which we artificially mark off for the convenience of our own limited thinking faculties. We have to understand the past, act in the present with that knowledge, and have a vision of the future which would draw us onwards and forwards.

It is obvious that this book could neither be complete nor fully satisfying. In the very nature of things, this could be but an honest attempt and nothing more. But certainly this first attempt can facilitate the next attempt towards the presentation of far more details with greater accuracy and completeness. I would even go to the extent of suggesting that there should be an Encyclopædia of Bihar which deals with every item concerning the land and its people and their activities throughout the three millenia, for which something in the nature of records and traditions are available. It is only then that scholars in Bihar would have the satisfaction of presenting to Biharis what they should really know, and to others what they should know about Bihar. It is only then that a philosophy of Bihar's history can be attempted.

However, let us be satisfied if this humble and pioneer attempt rouses the ambition of far more gifted writers to complete the work that has been hardly begun. I am sure that the present contributors will feel amply repaid if this attempt is appreciated as a first attempt and efforts are made in the future to see that a fuller story is soon written.

I

GEOLOGICAL EVOLUTION

IT is but natural that man should be more aware of his immediate environment than of the somewhat remote causes which lie at the back of that environment. He is constantly in touch with the atmosphere around him. His activities are mostly carried on on the surface of the Earth, in the midst of streams and mountains, surrounded by varied flora and fauna, and among his own people. He uses a variety of minerals which are taken out of the depths of the Earth. But the common man hardly realizes that he is mainly a product of his environment, and that he is being influenced every moment and in all sorts of ways by vast cosmic and geological processes.

However, it is some consolation to know that, unlike other animals, and far more than them, man is endowed with the faculty of knowing and understanding, and, to a certain extent, of manipulating things. He can justly claim to do what other living beings cannot, namely, to try to influence his environment to his best advantage.

Man's quest after knowledge has been constant and at the same time insatiable. He has always yearned to know the laws of the objective world of the senses and he has been equally eager to dive into the subjective world of his own consciousness. This double quest is far older than the *Ṛigveda*, the earliest recorded human poetry, which asks 'Who knows about the birth of the Creator himself?' (Nāsadīya Sūkta X—129.) It is certainly earlier than the question in the *Kenopanishad*, 'By whom is the mind urged to move?' In fact, man's whole progress must be measured by the advance he has been able to make in knowing the inner and outer laws of nature, and the use he has made of that knowledge with a view to benefiting himself and humanity, physically, mentally, morally and spiritually.

It may have been earthquakes which made man Earth-conscious

in the first instance. The Earth under his feet, which seemed unshakable, began to tremble. In some places it gaped, at others it belched out molten lava, scorching everything that came in its way. It was an enquiry into this phenomenon that ultimately led to the science of geology: that science which deals with the formation of the Earth's thin crust, the different hard strata of rocks and ores, and the age of the different types of vegetation and animal life which are entombed in the dead skin of the Earth. It has given birth to seismology, meteorology, glaciology, minerology, metallurgy and other sciences which directly promote human well-being.

Geology is thus not something too remote, nor is it a hunt for a mirage. It is a systematic and scientific probe into *terra firma*, the more or less permanent stage on which the drama of life is enacted. It is true that the geological calendar is very different from our own. While man thinks in terms of years and centuries, the geologists speak in terms of millions of solar years. But it should be remembered that our globe itself is but a sideshow in stellar space; a mere precipitate of cosmic events on a scale beyond any measure. As compared with the astronomical calendar, which counts in terms of light-years, the Earth's calendar is infantile indeed.

In fact, someone has defined human civilization as an interlude between two glacial periods! This does not seem to be a mere metaphor. It reminds us how much we are at the mercy of the natural forces which are active all about us. Yet man is master, though in a limited sense, in a sphere of his own, namely, the moral sphere. Both the starry heavens above and the moral law within were matters of the utmost wonder to Kant, the great German philosopher. It is that moral law which inspires man with faith and hope and leads him to the peace and joy that 'passeth understanding'.

Though superficially geology seems to be a dry science, it has a romance all its own. Is it not interesting, for instance, to know that the Himalayas are the youngest mountains and that they are still 'growing'? Does it not exercise our imagination to the utmost to conceive of the Gangā as having once flowed west, as it is alleged, taking along with it the waters of the Brahmaputra to the Arabian Sea instead of to the Bay of Bengal? Yet these are some of the things that geologists reveal to us. There are those among them who explain these phenomena in so interesting a manner indeed, that they almost make us see them as in a documentary film in which Mother Nature herself acts and the geologists only supply a running commentary!

We have the sensation of peeping into the cosmic cauldron that is boiling in the bowels of the Earth, or as though we were having a feel of nature's frigidaire, which can freeze oceans in a matter of moments.

The oldest geological formations of India are found in the Chotanagpur plateau of Bihar, just as the youngest are found in the northern plains, where they form, as it were, the last page in the geological history of the country. In Chotanagpur we come across a portion of the oldest part of the Earth's rocky crust. It is not possible to determine the age of this land-surface. Part of it might have belonged to the primeval crust of the Earth when it first cooled and condensed from a liquid state. The crust was originally very thin, and molten rocks broke through it along vertical fractures forming wall-like masses known as dykes, flooding the surface or forming volcanoes more often than in later geological periods.

The spontaneous decay of radioactive elements provides us with precise methods of determining the age of the Earth independently of speculation. One of these methods is based upon the fact that the ultimate end of the decay of radioactive elements like uranium and thorium is lead. The age of uranium or thorium can be determined by the ratio of any of the radioactive elements in the decay series to the stable end-product lead, 'since the amount of radiogenic lead found in it is a function of the amount of uranium or thorium now present and the time that has elapsed since the mineral first crystallized.'

Fortunately it is possible to distinguish between ordinary and radiogenic lead and the present rate of production of the latter is known with a remarkable degree of certainty. The problem in this method of determining the age of the Earth is to find the time that has elapsed since the primeval lead began to be modified by radiogenic lead, but 'on the evidence at present available, the most probable age of the Earth is about 3,350 million years.' (Holmes.)

After the solidification of the Earth's crust, a long time must have elapsed before the normal agents of weathering and erosion produced the first sediments from the wear and tear of the rocks of the crust and deposited them in the shallow coastal and inter-continental seas. Conditions then gradually became favourable for the origination and development of life in the form of moving molecules of protein. The remains of life, both animal and plant, are known as 'fossils'. Each successive period of slow accumulation of sedimentary strata followed by local fluctuations, or upheavals, or changes in the distribution of

land and sea, provides us not only with clues about the ancient forms of life on the Earth and the gradual evolution and extinction of many of them, but gives us a time-scale. This may be taken along with the rates of sedimentation. It must be borne in mind that the geological record is at best imperfect, for much of the strata, which are like the pages of an Earth-history, have been eroded away. The soundness of the time-scale based upon strata and fossils has been proved by modern radioactive methods, so that it has now become possible to assign definite or absolute ages in terms of years to parts of the geological record.

The principal subdivisions of geological time as deduced from fossil evidence and from absolute age determinations from radioactive minerals are shown in the following table:—

Era	*Period*	*Absolute age*
Quaternary	Holocene	—
	Pleistocene	—
Cenozoic or Cainozoic	Pliocene	—
	Miocene	—
	Oligocene	—
	Eocene	70 million years
Mesozoic	Cretaceous	—
	Jurassic	—
	Triassic	200 million years
Palaeozoic	Permian	—
	Carboniferous	—
	Devonian	—
	Silurian	—
	Ordovician	—
	Cambrian	500 million years
	Proterozoic	—
Pre-Cambrian Eras	Archæozoic	—
	Azoic	—

The term 'Archaean' is used to refer to the oldest Pre-Cambrian crystalline rocks of an area.

The Pre-Cambrian is about five times as long as the whole of the Post-Cambrian. Life had developed in the Archaeozoic (archaic forms of life) and the Proterozoic (primitive life), but as the organisms had no hard parts which could be preserved as fossils, the only traces of the life of these periods are the tracks of worms and impressions of very rudimentary forms of plants and animals. The oldest Pre-Cambrian rocks, i.e. the older part of the Archaean, are mostly crystalline and do not contain any evidence of the existence of life.

It is from all these points of view and with this perspective that we may now try to know something of the geology of Bihar, in the

making of which both the Himalayas and the Gangā have had an important hand.

PHYSICAL FEATURES

Bihar may be divided into two major physiographic divisions, namely, (*i*) the vast alluvial plains of the Gangā and her tributaries, and (*ii*) the Chotanagpur plateau, which is made up of several smaller plateaus and dissected hilly country interspersed with valleys. In North Bihar, the plains are very extensive and stretch up to the foothills of the Himalayas, while in South Bihar the plains are narrower and the depth of alluvium becomes thinner until it abuts on the dissected foreland of the Chotanagpur plateau in the south and the Kaimur plateau, north of the Son, in the west.

The southern fringe of the Himalayan foothill zone falls within the northern boundary of the State.

Of these broad divisions, the Chotanagpur plateau is the north-easterly projection of that vast plateau, Peninsular India. At one time it was joined to the plateau of Assam through the Garo hills. There is some difference of opinion as to the date of the formation of the Rajmahal-Garo hills gap, which enabled the drainage of the Gangā-Brahmaputra system to enter the plains of Bengal.

THE GEOLOGICAL PAST

Peering into the darkness of the geological past in an attempt to reconstruct the history of Bihar, we find that the whole of the State, including the northern plains, formed a part of the ancient continent called by the geologists Gondwanaland, named after the kingdom of Gondwana, the land of the Gonds in Madhya Pradesh. We have no direct knowledge of the nature of the rocks which lie under the alluvium of the Gangā basin, but must content ourselves with what we can envisage from the exposures of rocks in the foreland of the Chotanagpur plateau and in the southern part of the Himalayas, where the older rocks of the Peninsula have been raised up together with newer strata.

THE SĀTPURA BELT

There are remains of at least two ancient mountain chains, the older of which ran across Bihar towards Assam in a WSW.-ENE. direction as the continuation of the Sātpura range, for which reason it is considered as belonging to the Sātpura cycle of mountain

formation. The other had its eastern termination in Bihar. This latter is the Kaimur plateau, which is the eastern termination of the Kaimur range of the great Vindhyan cycle of mountain-building. The isotopic analysis of lead from an uraninite obtained from the pegmatites of Singar in the Gaya district gave an average age of 955 ± 40 million years. The pegmatites, carrying mica and other rare minerals, are intrusive into the Sātpura rocks, so that the age of the main mountain-building period must have been even older than this. The determination of age from a magnetite from Chaibassa in the Singhbhum district gave 970 million years. The Sātpura range was younger than the Eastern Ghats, the north-eastern end of which lies just south of the Singhbhum district. Part of the Shillong series of old metamorphic rocks in the Assam plateau has a Sātpura strike and part has an Eastern Ghats strike, so that the Eastern Ghats continued almost to the borders of Bihar and Assam.

In between the Sātpura and Vindhyan cycles, there was another period of mountain-building in India when the Aravalli Mountains shaped themselves into a formidable range. This is known as the Delhi cycle. The Nallamalai range in the Cuddapah district of Andhra was formed during this period, so that this mountain-building period is also known as the Cuddapah cycle. A small basin of sedimentation existed in Bihar during this period in the Kolhan region of the district of Singhbhum.

The granitic areas of the Chotanagpur region all intruded into the core of this ancient mountain chain, though the old sedimentary rocks have been highly metamorphosed and very much denuded through the ages. This period of the Earth's history is known as the Archaean. More than ninety per cent of the area of Bihar south of the plains of the Gangā is occupied by Archaean rocks and, in the remaining tenth of the area, the basement Archaean rocks are overlain by sedimentary strata of the Vindhyan and Gondwana periods, the lavas of the Rajmahal hills of the north-east corner of the Chotanagpur plateau, and the Deccan lavas, which extend up to the western fringe of the State.

The Dharwar System of Rocks

The sedimentary *facies* of the Archaean system of deposits have been loosely grouped in India under the name Dharwar, after the Dharwar district of Karnatak where these rocks were first recognized. These were the first formed sediments to be deposited in the depressions and

hollows of the primeval crust. This granitic or gneissic crust has, however, not been located anywhere in the Chotanagpur region. It has been re-melted and, with the accession of fresh igneous materials from within the crust, has been reborn as a new magma which developed intrusive contact with the overlying sedimentary strata and obscured the previous relationship. The Dharwar system of rocks is best developed in the Singhbhum district of Bihar and in the western part of Manbhum, the southern margin of the Ranchi plateau, the northern fringe of the Chotanagpur plateau and in the Santhal Parganas.

The component rocks in the Singbhum district and in the Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts in the adjoining parts of Orissa, are great masses of quartzites interbedded with thick masses of iron ore, the whole being known as banded haematite-quartzite, or jasper. This is the most important source of iron ore in India. The other rocks are phyllites, schists, conglomerates and tuff. Owing to their richness in iron ore, these strata have been grouped under the name of the Iron-ore series. In some places the phyllites have been partly replaced by manganese ores and constitute manganese-ore deposits. Mica-schists are the predominant native rocks of the Bihar mica belt. There are various types of schists which represent altered sediments, together with many hornblende schists and gneisses which represent igneous material. The Parasnath hill consists largely of garnetiferous pyroxene quartzites with a core of granitic gneiss. In the Archaean tract round the Jharia coalfield in this neighbourhood, are several dykes of more or less metamorphosed dolerite representing a phase of basic intrusion. Quartzites, slates and phyllites again form hill ranges along the northern edge of the Chotanagpur plateau as in the Bhiaura, Gidhaur, Sheikhpura and Rajgir hills, and the Kharakpur hill. The Luckeesarai hill is made of a metamorphosed conglomerate overlaid with quartzite.

GRANITE

Everywhere in the world the larger granite intrusions known as batholiths are associated with fold mountains. The folding and uplift of the Iron-ore series was accompanied by intrusions of granite, which not only formed the core of these folds, but gave strength to the mountains and caused a further metamorphism of the enclosing rocks. The granites are now exposed over extensive tracts owing to

the age-long denudation to which these ancient fold mountains have been subjected since their very formation.

In the Singhbhum district there are several outcrops of granitic rocks which, in view of their different textures, variation of mineral composition and degree of metamorphism, have been given different regional names such as the Chotanagpur granite-gneiss, the Singhbhum granite and Chakradharpur granite-gneiss, the Arkasani granite of Kharsawan and the soda-granite of the copper belt in the zone of shearing following the south-easterly trend of the rocks and ranges from Tatanagar eastwards. Of these, the Chotanagpur granite-gneiss occupies a small area in the Singhbhum district, but a larger area in the Ranchi, Santhal Parganas, Hazaribagh and Manbhum districts. These granitic intrusions may either be of the same age, or they may have closely followed each other. The Ranchi and Hazaribagh plateaus are flanked by the denuded outcrops of old sedimentary rocks which have been so highly metamorphosed and impregnated by granite injections as to make them look like granites. The Chutupalu range, up through which the motor road to Ranchi wends its way, is a relic of the old fold-mountain of the Archaean period.

The Cuddapah System

The next higher formation in the geological scale in India is known as the Cuddapah system, after its type area in the Cuddapah district of Andhra. The Cuddapah system of rocks is separated from the Archaean formations by a profound time-gap, so that while the Archaean rocks are highly metamorphosed, the younger Cuddapah rocks are unmetamorphosed sandstones, shales and limestones which rest unconformably on the eroded surface of the older rocks. In the Singhbhum district, the Cuddapah system of rocks is known as the Kolhan series consisting of sandstones, shales and limestones, beginning with a basal conglomerate. Kolhan sandstones can be seen in Chaibassa resting upon an eroded surface of Singhbhum granite.

The Vindhyan Strata

Younger than the Cuddapah system of rocks are the strata of the Vindhya mountains, known as the Vindhyan system. The Vindhyan rocks occupy a small area in the extreme north-western part of Bihar between Sasaram and the Son valley which forms the eastern end of the Kaimur plateau. The strata are almost horizontal, which is an

indication of block uplift without much folding. Towards the west they have been even more gently folded. The top of the Kaimur plateau is built of the Kaimur sandstones, shales and quartzites of the Kaimur series which is the lowest division of the Upper Vindhyans. The Lower Vindhyan strata, known as the Semri series, are exposed in the Kaimur scarps, which extend westward from Sasaram to the watershed between the Son and the Narbadā for a distance of about 240 miles. In Bihar, the scarps overlook the Son valley from the north; but south of the Son, the lower stages of the Semri series form low hills which merge into the gneisses of the Gaya and Palamau districts. The lowermost beds of the Semri series consist of limestones with a basal conglomerate about two thousand feet thick.

This is followed by a thick series of alternating limestones and shales known as the Rohtas stage. It is this limestone which forms the basis of the cement industry of Dalmianagar and Madhya Bharat.

After the uplifting of the Vindhyan system of deposits, the sea finally disappeared from India and an epoch of continental conditions set in, which, except for a local ingress of the sea along the Narbadā valley and in Madhya Bharat, still continues. Shallow seas extended from the west over the region north of the central axis of the Himalayas in the Spiti valley in Tibet, and in the Salt Range area. These were the forerunners of the Tethys sea which was to be the theatre of the next surge of mountain-building activity.

The Upper Carboniferous Glaciation

From the close of the Vindhyan period to the end of the Middle Carboniferous there had been continuous land-conditioning with erosion, but without any deposition of strata. Therefore these chapters of the Earth's history in Peninsular India are completely missing. In the Upper Carboniferous, about two hundred million years back, Gondwanaland experienced a glacial climate and much of it lay under a thick mantle of ice. Evidence of this continental glaciation is to be found in the presence of boulder beds containing pebbles and boulders of different rocks with ice-marks and scratches, which form the base of the coal-bearing beds in certain parts of the coalfields of Bihar. This glacial formation is an important datum-line in the geological record of India. It has been named the Talchir boulder bed, because it was recognized first in the Talchir district of Orissa. The Upper Carboniferous period in India is important for other reasons. It was a period of profound geographical changes

and powerful and extensive earth-movements. The isolated Central Himalayan seas were deepened and there was a marine invasion of the great Mediterranean Sea from the west. This is the Tethys sea of the geologists which occupied the present site of the Himalayas from one end to the other. A thick pile of marine fossiliferous sediments began to be deposited on the floor of this sea till the end of the Eocene, when those first upheavals took place which were to give birth to the highest mountain range of the globe.

As has been mentioned already, the Chotanagpur plateau extended north in this dim past over what are now the Gangā plains, and the waters of the Tethys washed the northern shore of Gondwanaland.

The Gondwana Coal Basins

While in the north a gigantic down-warping of the crust was taking place and letting in the sea, Gondwanaland was affected by earth-movements of a tensional type which tore it up into separate blocks. Large linear tracts of the country fell between parallel or sub-parallel faults to form a series of isolated depressions or rift valleys, roughly arranged in definite lines, in each of which fresh-water deposits of a torrential type began to accumulate. These basins began to be connected by large sluggish rivers which wound their way eastwards from the high ground of eastern Madhya Pradesh. The Chotanagpur plateau was split into two portions by this series of faults and the depressions thus formed are now marked by the coalfields of Bihar and Bengal and the basin of the Damodar. North of the Hazaribagh plateau and the dissected uplands of the Gaya district was another basin of fluviatile deposition which extended northward round about the Tethys sea, so that Gondwana beds are now found in the outer fringe of the Himalayas in the Darjeeling district and in Sikkim. In both places, coal has been found associated with strata containing plant fossils of the Gondwana age. It may not be out of place to mention here that some of the important drainage basins were established during the Gondwana period and that later movements have only accentuated the old drainage pattern. While the Damodar basin strikes almost west-east with its string of coalfields, the Narbadā-Son had a slightly north-easterly course and was connected with the Himalayan Gondwana basin. Other basins formed at this time, such as the Mahanadi and Wardha-Godavari valleys, had north-west to south-east trends, and both have coalfields

associated with them. All these rivers passed through the breaches which were formed in the old Sātpura chain. The system of deposits which accumulated in these basins constituted the Gondwana system of Indian geology.

As has been explained, the principal basins of the Gondwana strata are distributed in an east-west belt, parallel to the general structural trend of the Archaean rocks which determined the drainage of the Auranga-Damodar system with a divide (watershed) between them which connects the Ranchi and Hazaribagh plateaus. From west to east there are six basins of varying areas, namely, Hutar, Auranga, Karanpura, Ramgarh, Bokaro and Jharia. The north-west corner of the Raniganj field, which is in the same general strike, also falls within Bihar.

The following table gives the classification of the Gondwana system as developed in Bihar:—

		Damodar Valley	*Rajmahal Area*	*Age*
Upper Gondwana Beds		Rajmahal	Rajmahal with traps and inter-traps	Lower Juras
		Supra Panchet	Dubrajpur	Upper Trias
Lower Gondwana Beds	Damodar	Panchet (not represented in Jharia field)		Lower Trias
		Raniganj sandstones and coal seams		Upper Permian
		Barren Measures (Ironstone shales)		Middle Permian
		Barakar sandstones, Karharbari coalseams and shales	Barakar	Lower Permian
		Rikba plant beds Talchir shales Boulder beds	Talchir	Upper Carboniferous

There are local unconformities in which the Karharbari stage may be missing. Between the Raniganj series and the Panchet series there is a slight unconformity.

LATERITE

In the western fringe of the State, in the Palamau and Ranchi districts, some of the high plateaus or 'pats', such as that of Netarhat, rise to over three thousand feet above sea level and, being the easternmost outliers of the Deccan traps, are capped by lavas. A small thickness of the usual infratrappeans separates the traps from the Archaean basement. Capping these plateaus are spreads of high-level laterite containing valuable deposits of bauxite which is the source of

aluminium. Similar 'pats' are those of Sirguja and Udaipur in Madhya Pradesh. This high-level laterite is of some geological antiquity and is perhaps of the Eocene age. Much younger geologically is the low-level laterite formed partly by the spreading-out of the detritus shed from the high-level laterite during the Pleistocene to the Recent age, and partly from the local alteration of the underlying rocks. It is more siliceous and ferruginous than the high-level laterite. Low-level laterite is found at intervals along a belt on the western edge of the alluvial tract of the Gangā, beginning at the eastern foot of the Rajmahal hills. In these hills there is an occurrence of high-level laterite at 1,655 feet above sea-level, which slopes gradually from the western scarp of the hills to the low-level laterite bordering the plains of the Gangā to the east.

The Siwalik System and the Formation of the Gangā Basin

Champaran district, in the extreme north-west corner of the State, encroaches upon the Siwalik system of deposits of Tertiary fresh-water formation which are found along the entire length of the Himalaya mountains. Here the Someshwar range consists entirely of Siwalik sandstones and conglomerates.

The alluvial deposits of the Gangā and her tributaries constitute the last chapter of the geological history, not only of Bihar, but of India. These deposits conceal beneath them the northern extension of the Chotanagpur plateau in Bihar and of Peninsular India as a whole. When the sediments which had accumulated in the Tethys sea began to be compressed, folded and raised up by the northerly movement of Peninsular India, the frontal portion of the latter sagged down owing to the pressure of the advancing and rising earth-waves of the Himalayas. The depression began to form in the Upper Eocene when the first Himalayan uplift had taken place, and reached its maximum depth during the second and main Himalayan upheaval in the Middle Miocene. This wide trough between the Vindhya-Kaimur highlands and the northern proto-Himalaya was then occupied by an arm of the sea in which was deposited the lower Tertiary (Eocene) nummulitic limestone. As this sea retreated after the Middle Miocene, it was gradually filled up by the Tertiary fresh-water deposits of India known as the Murree and Siwalik systems.

Beyond the Siwalik front, the depression was converted into the

low flat plains over which the Gangā and her tributaries began to meander. The great liability to floods of the rivers of North Bihar is due to their still-persisting steep Himalayan gradients, which give them a high velocity during the period of heavy precipitation, and the sudden change from a deep V-shaped valley to a broad and shallow depression in the plain.

The depression is deepest in the north and gradually slopes upward towards the Peninsular foreland of the south. Recent boring for a tube-well at Patna showed that alluvial deposits continue even below 2,000 feet. Gravity survey by the oscillations of a pendulum shows that the depth of the alluvial deposits varies between 6,000 and 10,000 feet. The alluvium of the Gangā plains can be divided into two sections, an older yellow form, rich in kankar, of the Pleistocene age, and a newer and often darker one which is still in process of formation and is characterized by a scarcity or absence of kankar. In consequence of the relative elevation of the plains and the resultant steepening of the river gradients, the older alluvium is now suffering erosion. The depression originally formed by the down-warping of the crust in front of the rising mountain must have been further accentuated by the load of deposits, since fluviatile or river-borne deposits, such as those made by the Son, have been found at great depths in borehole samples for the construction of tube-wells. Subsidence allowed further deposition.

THE EARTHQUAKE BELT

The trough is shallow at its two ends and deepest in its middle part in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Further, the slope of the trough to the north is not smooth, for a gravity survey has shown that there are several corrugations or ridges on its surface. The northern edge of the trough, being the hinge zone between a subsiding area to the south and a rising area to the north, is also under much tectonic strain. It is therefore the site of lengthy fractures more or less parallel to the axis of the Himalayas. Farther south there are other zones of fractures below the alluvium. The Bihar earthquake of 1934 was due to further movement along these sub-surface faults, as the epicentral tract of the highest intensity extended from Sitamarhi to Madhubani, the central part of which suffered from extensive slumping. There was another earthquake in Bihar about a century earlier. In fact, the earthquake belt of India runs along the northern margin of the plains.

HIMALAYAN UPLIFTS

From this it appears that there have been at least three phases of uplift of the Himalayas. The first phase was at the end of the Eocene period, which drove back the Nummulitic sea of the Himalayan area and raised up the floor of the Tethys in one system of folds. The Nummulitic limestone is elevated at places to 15,000 feet and more. The second and more powerful movement came at the end of the Miocene period, which not only raised the main Himalayan chain further, but also raised up the Murree-Kasauli sediments into the lesser Himalayan zone. The last phase of the Himalayan upheaval came after the Siwalik epoch, as a result of which the Upper Siwalik strata are so tightly folded as to stand almost vertically, in some places being thrust over the younger alluvium. The periodic uplift of the mountains in the later part of their history was marked by a thrusting forward of their outer folds over the plains of the south by a series of reversed faults which are known as 'boundary' faults, since, in most places, they marked the outer limit of deposition of the Tertiary deposits. Recent work in the Western Himalayas has shown that immense recumbent sheets from the inner range have moved forward and now rest over the newer rocks of the outer zone along gently inclined planes of faults known as thrust planes. These sheets are known in the Swiss Alps as 'nappes'. The Alps and the Himalayan mountains, particularly the Western Himalayas, have many such similarities.

After the conquest of Everest in 1953, the question of the exact height of the celebrated peak was again revived. The methods for the determination of height which were in use about a century ago have been improved upon and more refined methods of the instrumental observation of vertical angles are now used. Recent field observations by the Department of the Survey of India have shown that the height should be revised to 29,028 feet, and that the heights of Kanchenjungha and Makalu should be increased by 30-36 feet. These higher values do not, however, indicate that the Himalaya mountains are rising, for recent observations of the height of some of the lesser peaks do not show any measurable change in the value recorded early in the nineteenth century. Yet it should not be assumed that the Himalayas have come to rest after reaching their culmination in height. A century is too short a period for such changes to be noticed. The frequent earthquakes in the outer belt of the range and the river basins at the base of the mountains indicate a condition

of instability and movement. The rapid erosion of mountain ranges by glaciers and rivers causes an unloading which may result in further periodic elevation, just as an iceberg keeps its surface above water, in spite of melting, by constant vertical movement.

Yet evidences of slow vertical movement are common in the outer Himalayan belt. In the region of the Tista valley, river terraces, covered with gravels and boulders of Pleistocene and recent age, rise gradually towards the north, and some even rise to a height of 300 feet above the floor of the valley. A slight warping is noticeable in the terraces and this also suggests compressive movement.

It will have appeared from the foregoing account that the most important geological formations from the economic point of view are the Archaean sedimentary rocks with their deposits of iron ore, manganese ore, limestone, dolomite, kyanite, china clay, steatite and building and other stones. Among the igneous rocks of the Archaean period, chromite, asbestos and pot stone are associated with ultravasic intrusive rocks of the peridotite family; vanadium and titanium-bearing magnetites are found in basic rocks such as gabbro; mica and various rare minerals, including atomic minerals, are found in pegmatite veins; and copper, gold, apatite-magnetite and so on are associated with other granitic veins. The next important formation is the Gondwana system, with its deposits of coal, fire-clay, china clay, sandstones and glass sand. The Vindhyan system of strata is rich in limestone, sandstone, shale, glass sand, and pyrites. The laterite formations yield bauxite, manganese ore, iron ore and building stone, while the older alluvium is a source of kankar, saltpetre and sodium sulphate, and the newer alluvium provides material for bricks and pottery.

MINERALS IN BIHAR

The importance of Bihar as a source of economic minerals cannot be over-emphasized. Here the occurrence of the more important minerals will be described (in alphabetical order) although a large number of other economic minerals are found in small quantities in the Archaean rocks. Obviously the most important of them, even from the all-India point of view, both in quantity and quality, are coal, iron ore, bauxite, mica, uranium-bearing ores, copper, fire-clays and certain others.

Apatite. This is a phosphate which was used in the past in Bihar as a fertilizer and in the manufacture of phosphoric pig-iron. The

mineral is to be found as veins and lenses in the schists along a zone of country in the Dhalbhum sub-division extending for about 40 miles from the eastern border of Saraikela to Khejurdari (22° 24′ N: 86° 34′ E). In some sections magnetite associates with it to form an apatite-magnetite rock together with some biotite, chlorite and a little quartz, as from the Saraikela border to Chander Buru. The granite which produced the veins is also responsible for copper mineralization along the same zone, and apatite-bearing lenses are found on the hanging wall-side of the copper lodes. In the apatite-magnetite belt, apatite was for some years mined, for agricultural purposes and for iron, at Nandup (22° 44′ N: 86° 12′ E), but the demand ceased owing to the importation of higher-grade phosphate from Egypt and Algeria, and on account of the discontinuance of the manufacture of phosphoric pig-iron for foundry purposes by the Iron and Steel Works at Kulti near Asansol. Magnetite is abundant at Pathargarha.

Asbestos. Tremolite asbestos (a fireproof mineral) which is inferior to chrysotile asbestos, occurs at several places in Saraikela (Bara Bana, Patka, Chota Dana) and Dhalbhum (Manpur, Digarsai). Chrysotile asbestos occurs, locally associated with the chromite-bearing ultravasic rocks of Roro and other places, near Chaibassa. Asbestos is used in the manufacture of corrugated sheets, which are fireproof and light, and of boards for laboratory purposes.

Bauxite. Deposits of bauxite (the ore of aluminium) are located along the edges of the scarps bordering the laterite-capped plateaus in the Palamau and Ranchi districts. In Palamau, small deposits are found on the Jamira Pat, west of Mahuadanr (23° 24′ N: 84° 07′ E), and Netarhat, but the deposits of the Ranchi district are the most important. These are found in four distinct areas which have a total minimum estimated quantity of 4,400,000 tons of bauxite. The best deposits are on the Bagru Pat near Lohardaga in the Ranchi district, where there is a minimum of about 5,000,000 tons associated with good quality clay, some of which resembles fuller's earth. Other areas are Dudha Pat, Kutcha Pat, Khama Pat and Banjari Pat, besides the smaller pats having laterite caps. A recent estimate calculates the reserves of bauxite with 50% or more of Al_2O_3 in the Ranchi and Palamau districts as being approximately 9,000,000 tons, out of a total of 25,766,000 tons for the whole of India. Deposits of aluminous laterite approaching bauxite have been found in the Kharakpur and other hills of the Monghyr district.

The Indian Aluminium Company gets its bauxite from Lohardaga;

this is concentrated to alumina at Muri on the Suvarnarekha river near the border of the Ranchi district. The metal is reduced by hydro-electricity at Alwaye in Travancore and the rolling mills are at Belur near Calcutta.

Chromite. Chromite occurs in veins and bands in the ultrabasic igneous rocks which are intrusive into the phyllites and slates of the Iron-ore series near Jojohatu, a village about eleven miles west of Chaibassa. The Tata Iron and Steel Company Ltd. used to obtain their supply from mines at Kitta Buru, but these have recently been abandoned as the deposits are almost exhausted. Deposits are nowadays also being worked at Roro and Karakatakuti by another concern. It is mainly used in the manufacture of stainless steel, rustless cutlery, tools and machinery, and as a protective coating and in making dyes.

Clays. An extensive industry has grown up based on the various types of clays of Bihar. Fire-clays from which fire-bricks are made for use in furnaces, occur as beds beneath coal seams where the coal probably formed *in situ*. On the Jharia field, fire-clays are found near the station and at Pathardih. Fire-clays are also worked at Rajhara on the Daltonganj coalfield. A number of fire-brick and pottery works which use fire-clays have been established in Jharia coalfield at Kumardhubi and at other places. The Gondwana clays are also used for ceramic wares.

Beds of white clay 4 to 5 feet in thickness are found in the Rajmahal hills, near Hura (24° 59′ N: 97° 23′ E) and at other places along the western margin of the hills. Mangal Hat is well known for the supply of clay for Bengal Potteries Ltd. It is obtained here by crushing the sandstone, which has a clayey matrix, and then washing out the clay.

The richest kaolin deposits are found near Hat Gamaria (22° 16′ N: 85° 45′ E) in the Singhbhum district, where they have been formed by the alteration of granite. These clays are used for the porcelain and textile industries. There are other workable deposits at Pirpahar in the district of Monghyr, three miles east of Monghyr city, and a good quality kaolin has been reported from Nawadih (24° 47′ N: 86° 23′ E).

Coal. Bihar has a total of twenty-one coalfields, five of which lie along the western edge of the Rajmahal hills, nine along the Damodar-Auranga valleys and seven in a parallel belt to the north. In the following list the coalfields are grouped according to the districts in which they are situated :—

MANBHUM — (1) Part of Raniganj, (2) Jharia, (3) Chandrapura;

HAZARIBAGH — (4) Bokaro, (5) Ramgarh, (6) South Karanpura, (7) North Karanpura (part in Palamau), (8) Itkhori, (9) Chope, (10) Giridih;

PALAMAU — (11) Auranga, (12) Hutar, (13) Daltonganj;

SANTHAL PARGANAS— (14) Jainti, (15) Sahajuri, (16) Kundit Karaia, (17) Brahmani, (18) Pachwara, (19) Chuparbhita, (20) Jilbari, and (21) Hura.

The Jharia and Bokaro fields are the most important, the Giridih and Karanpura fields come next, while the remaining fields produce either small quantities or none at all at the present time.

The western end of the Raniganj coalfield, west of the Barakar river, lies in Bihar.

The Jharia field covers an area of 175 square miles of which 105 are occupied by coal-bearing rocks. It now yields almost 40 per cent of India's total production, or about 13 million tons.

Copper Ore. India is obliged to import considerable quantities of copper to supplement domestic production. Although copper ores are known to occur in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Mysore, Bihar is almost the only source of the copper which is produced in India at present (about 99·5%). Even now, after many years of working, she has a large reserve. At the close of the year 1954, the total ore reserves were estimated at 3,369,286 tons, with an average assay value of 2·49 per cent of metallic copper.

The copper belt, indicated by old workings, extends for about 80 miles from Duarparam in the Kera Estate in Singhbhum district, eastwards through Kharsawan and Saraikela, into Dhalbhum, where it curves to the south-east through the Rakha Mines and Mushabani and ends at Baharagora. The ores occur as veins in the granite and adjoining schists, and are best developed along the zone of overthrust already referred to in geological history. The chief mining areas are Mushabani, Badia and Raksha.

Iron Ore. The mode of occurrence of the iron ores of Singhbhum district have already been described. The enclosing rocks, known as the Iron-ore series, form characteristic steep-sided ridges rising to between 2,500 and 3,000 feet. The lower ground is built of phyllites shales and lavas. The banded haematite-jaspers consist of alternating bands of jasper, a form of silica, as well as haematite containing a variable amount of iron oxide. Both the iron ores and jaspers are very hard, and because of their unusual hardness they stand up as ridges and cliffs. The most important ridge runs for about thirty

miles from a point some three miles south-west of Gua (22° 13′N: 85° 23′ E) in the Singhbhum district to the neighbourhood of Rontha in Bonai in Orissa. It is known as the Iron-ore Range. There are three or four parallel ranges north of Gua which are also capped by high-grade ore and there are several other large deposits in this area. The famous Noamundi mines, which are owned by Tatas, are situated on the hill known as Kotamati Buru. The ore reserves amount to several thousand million tons. The Singhbhum district alone accounts for nearly half (45%) of the total Indian production of iron ore. In 1954 the production was 1,947,563 tons compared to the all-India total of 4,308,273 tons.

Magnetite ores occur near Gore (23° 38′ N: 85° 58′ E) in the Palamau district. Geophysical prospecting in 1947 led to an estimate of 600,000 tons. Vanadiferous and titaniferous magnetite also occurs near Dublabera and Sindurpur in southern Dhalbhum.

Kyanite. Kyanite is used in the ceramics industry, particularly in the manufacture of refractory materials. It occurs along an eighty-mile belt, mostly along the northern side of the copper belt. Within this area, the most important deposit is in Kharsawan, while there are smaller ones in Saraikela, Jhar Govindpur in Sarai kela and still smaller ones in several other places in the Singhbhum district. The Lapsa Baru kyanite deposit of Kharsawan is the largest in the world, with reserves of 500,000 to 750,000 tons to a depth of ten feet.

Manganese Ore. The manganese deposits of Bihar occur both in the Iron-ore series and the Kolhan series of Singhbhum district. Near Chaibassa, the basal sandstone and limestone of the Kolhan series have been replaced by manganese ore which occurs either as thin lenticles parallel to the bedding or as lateritic surface ore, commonly high in iron. In southern Kolhan and at Leda Buru, manganese ores occur in the phyllites of the Iron-ore series, associated in places with chert which has been replaced. The higher-grade deposits are associated with chert. The largest deposits are lateritic, but the ore is of a high grade. Bihar's production is roughly half a million tons compared to India's total production of 19·5 million tons.

Mica. The mica industry of Bihar is of great importance not only to Bihar and India, but to the world. India is the largest producer of block mica and mica splittings, which amount to about 80 per cent of the world's supply. The Bihar mica belt runs for about eighty miles from the eastern side of the Gaya district across Hazaribagh and into the Monghyr and Bhagalpur districts, with a width

up to twenty miles. The deposits are spread over an area of 1,500 square miles. Bihar is noted for the excellent quality of its mica known as 'Ruby', which is mineralogically a muscovite. The skill of the Bihari labourer in trimming and splitting mica is well known. The largest production has come from the Kodarma area. Associated with mica in the pegmatites are many valuable minerals such as beryl, feldspar, apatite, and rare radium-bearing minerals. The foreign market, which has been adversely affected by competition from the Argentine, Brazil, Russia and Canada, is likely to be stabilized by the introduction of mica standards under an agreement with the International Standards Organization.

Graphite, Feldspar and Steatite. These three minerals also are found in Bihar in small quantities in different places and are mentioned in the table at the end of the chapter.

MINERAL SPRINGS OF BIHAR

Geological Aspects. Certain geological conditions are to be deduced from the way in which mineral springs are distributed. Thus, when a group of springs occur more or less along a line, it indicates a line of fault or dislocation. In the limestone region, springs may issue along solution channels or orifices along the joint planes. In the case of thermal springs, the source of the water is deeper than that of cold springs.

Distribution and Therapeutic Reputation. There are three main belts of mineral springs in Bihar: (*i*) the belt running more or less parallel to the coalfield boundaries, (*ii*) the belt around Rajgir, and (*iii*) the belt around Monghyr. These springs cure skin diseases and digestive disorders, induce appetite and also cure rheumatism and gout.

Hazaribagh, Manbhum and Palamau Districts. The hot sulphur springs at Charak, Jherbari, Sheopur and Tantloi in Manbhum district, at Jarom in Palamau district, and the Kawagandhwani series of alkaline springs in Hazaribagh district, are situated in the Archaean terrain in zones more or less parallel and close to the boundary of the Gondwanas and are related to the post-Gondwana faulting. The hot sulphur springs of Surjakund and Duari in the Hazaribagh district are also situated in the Archaeans.

Both the Patalsur spring on the Grand Trunk Road near the Barkatta Dak Bungalow and that at the summit of Parasnath are cold ones and are situated in the Archaean gneisses.

Monghyr District. The springs of Monghyr district occur in a line extending over a distance of thirty miles or more along the strike of

the Kharakpur hills and, except for those at Phillipskund and Sitakund, are confined to this region.

Patna and Gaya Districts. The simple thermal springs of the Rajgir group which occur in Patna and Gaya districts emerge out of Archaean quartzites. They occur in three distinct series, (*i*) the Rajgir springs in Patna district, (*ii*) the Tapoban springs, and (*iii*) the Agnikund springs of Gaya district.

There are more than a dozen springs on both sides of the Betarni river at a distance of about a mile from Rajgir Kund Station. The Tapoban springs are about twelve miles WSW. of Rajgir in Gaya district. There are four springs: Sanat, Sanatan, Sanatnandan and Sanatkumar (Brahmakund), all lying E-W. along the foot of the quartzite hill. The Agnikund springs lie along the foot of the quartzite situated about eight miles ESE. of Rajgir. (Adapted from *Mineral Springs of India* by Dr P. K. Ghosh).

The table below and the pictograph overleaf give a general idea of the mineral production in this State.

Bihar, on an average, accounts for half the total output of the coal and mica, the whole of the copper and for about 45% of the iron ore produced in India.

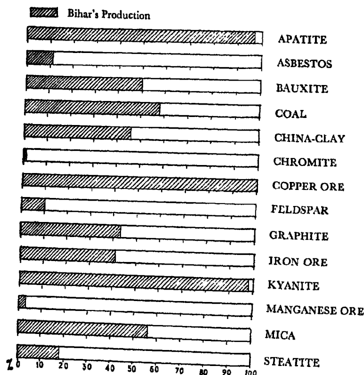
MINERAL PRODUCTION IN BIHAR IN 1955 COMPARED TO THE TOTAL PRODUCTION IN INDIA

Mineral	*Total Production in Bihar (in tons)* 1955	*Total Production in India (in tons)* 1955	*Approximate percentage in India total*
Apatite	5,400	5,562	97
Asbestos	155	1,396	11
Bauxite	41,177	81,172	50
Coal	19,424,000	38,225,959	58
China-clay	54,525	117,471	46·4
Chromite	1,301	89,349	1·3
Copper ore	353,054	353,054	100
Feldspar	506*	5,231	9·6
Graphite	700	1,613	43·4
Iron ore	1,919,974	4,652,940	41
Kyanite	11,486	11,741	98
Manganese ore	49,465	1,583,538	3
Mica	73,036*	103,381*	56
Steatite	7,608	42,390	17·9

*(1954)

Pictograph I

PRODUCTION OF MINERALS IN BIHAR



The shaded portion represents Bihar's production as a percentage of the total production of India as a whole.

II

GEOGRAPHY OF BIHAR

Section A

Physical and Economic Geography

NEXT to the geological formations and mineral deposits of a region comes its geography, which is perhaps better known to us than its geology. But geography is no longer only a description of the physical characteristics of a region, as the word denotes. The connotation of the term has been developing rapidly with the modern growth of the social sciences. Physical geography is not an isolated block of knowledge, but has always to be considered in relation to the human society that inhabits a particular region or country. Accordingly, the social sciences usually consider geography in its various aspects, namely, physical, economic, human, cultural, and so on.

It is obvious that in a book of this kind we must restrict ourselves to a limited treatment of the subject. Therefore, physical and partially economic geography only are dealt with here, together with some facts of historical geography.

It is necessary, however, even for a general reader to know that with the progress of knowledge the inter-relation between physical environment and social development is becoming clearer, and the realization that everything is integrated with the whole is dawning more and more on the human mind. While physical geography influences man, man is nowadays in a position to manipulate his geography, to however limited an extent, to his advantage. He need no longer think of himself as a mere plaything of geology or geography, for he has reached a point where he can study his environment thoroughly and learn to modify it.

Physical Features

The State of Bihar lies between latitude 21°58′ and 27°31′ N.

and longitude 83°20′ and 88°32′ E. It is bounded on the east by West Bengal, and on the west by Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. To the south lies Orissa and to the north the independent kingdom of Nepal.

The present area of the State of Bihar is 67,202 square miles and the population 38,779,562, after deducting the population of the territory transferred to West Bengal, from the figure of the 1951 census which was, in round numbers, 40.2 millions. But if we add the figure of normal growth during the last five years (1951-56), the population would be round about 40 millions.

Bihar consists of two distinct physical units of roughly equal area, the Gangetic plain and the Chotanagpur plateau. The Gangā divides the plain into two rather unequal divisions, one north and the other south of its course.

The North Gangetic plain extends from the base of the Tarai in the north to the Gangā in the south, comprising an area of about 22,000 square miles. It includes the whole of the Tirhut division, Purnea district, North Monghyr and Saharsa. Except for the Sumeswar and the Dun hills in the extreme north-west, it presents an almost flat appearance and has an elevation of less than 250 feet above sea level. The Sumeswar and the Dun hills cover an area of about 364 square miles in Champaran. They are the lowest and the outermost of all the Himalayan ranges, immediately overlooking the plain, and form part of a long range which runs along the whole length of Nepal, at the southern base of which lies the swampy submontane tract called the Tarai. The Sumeswar range runs along the northern frontier of the State for a distance of about 46 miles and varies in altitude from a few hundred feet to 2,884 feet at Fort Sumeswar, which commands a magnificent view of the Himalayas wrapped in the grandeur of eternal snow. The Dun hills lie to the south of the Sumeswar range, from which they are separated by the Dun Valley. They are a range of low hills and extend for about 20 miles from the north-west to the south-east. The Tarai that lies towards their southern margin forms a narrow belt of submontane forest, followed by a prairie land of long reedy grasses. It is mostly marshy and unhealthy. This area of hills is but sparsely populated by an aboriginal tribe called the Tharus. But for this small area of hills in the north-west, one looks in vain in any direction for a hill or mound which may interrupt the continuity of the level surface.

The North Gangetic plain is the playground of rivers—the Gogra,

Gandak, Bagmati, Kosi, Mahananda and a host of minor streams—which descend from the Himalayas and make their way to the Gangā in frequently changing channels. The Kosi particularly has earned the bad name of being the most changeable stream in India, shifting its bed all the time. Because of the large quantities of silt they deposit the rivers at many points flow on ridges slightly elevated above the general level of the country and frequently inundate the low-lying lands on either side during the rains.

The South Gangetic plain occupies the greater part of what is popularly known as South Bihar. It covers an area of about 13,000 square miles. It is wide towards the west and the middle, and extremely narrow towards the east. The outlying hills and undulations of the Chotanagpur plateau encroach upon the plain from the south, until near Monghyr they extend in the Kharakpur hills as far north as the Gangā itself, and after a brief recession run along the bank of the river for a considerable distance as the Rajmahal hills.

The South Gangetic differs in many respects from the North Gangetic plain. It is higher in the south and slopes towards the Gangā, but the slope is not so gradual as in the North Gangetic plain. While the North is liable to flood and change, the South Gangetic plain is stable and not subject to floods except in limited areas. Moreover, it is much more diversified than the North, and a great many hills spring as islands of high rock from the level alluvium. Notable among the hills that lie scattered in the South Gangetic plain are the Barabar hills, the Rajgir-Jethian hills, and the Kharakpur hills. These hills lie in the districts of Gaya, Patna and Monghyr, forming a number of separate ridges or isolated peaks which strike north-eastward until they reach the Gangā in the Kharakpur hills, near the town of Monghyr. Though not quite naked, they have been highly denuded, and most of the vegetation has either been cleared away with the axe or has disappeared with the erosion of the surface soil. They therefore present semi-bare rocky surfaces having a thin covering of grass and scrub. In the Kharakpur hills, areas of jungle still survive as but poor remnants of the dense forests which once clothed these hills. The Barabar and the Rajgir hills are generally less than 1,000 feet above sea level, but they exceed 1,000 feet at several places. The Kharakpur hills have several peaks rising above 1,600 feet.

The trough occupied by the channel of the Gangā is contained by high banks on either side. After the close of the monsoon, the

appear within the trough large expanses of sand and silt deposits called 'diaras' which vary greatly in extent and position every year.

The Chotanagpur plateau covers an enormous area of 34 to 35 thousand square miles, comprising the southern half of Bihar. It includes the administrative division of Chotanagpur, the greater part of Santhal Parganas and the southern portions of Shahabad, Gaya, Monghyr, and Bhagalpur districts. In contrast to the plain, the Chotanagpur plateau is a region of great unevenness and consists of a succession of plateaus, hills and valleys. Most of the plateau has an elevation exceeding 1,000 feet, with a great part rising about 2,000 feet above sea level. But while there are hills rising to 3,000 feet or more, there are also river valleys which are only 400 feet above sea level. The heart of the main plateau consists of two large plateaus—those of Hazaribagh and Ranchi, separated by the structural basin of the Damodar. These have an elevation of about 2,000 feet but carry, on the west, a still higher plateau known as the 'Pats' which is about 1,000 feet higher. The edges of the plateaus are usually broken into steep slopes which fall away in rugged spurs and hills cut by ravines and rivers which give them the impression of hills from below. A characteristic feature of the plateaus are the huge, isolated, rounded or conical protuberances of rock which rise suddenly from the general level and are visible for many miles around. The Hazaribagh plateau has on its eastern margin Parasnath, the highest hill in Bihar rising to a height of 4,480 feet.

In the extreme south, in Singhbhum, is the hilly region of Porahat and Kolhan, a mountainous tract containing high hills with alternating steep valleys, specially west of the Karo river. The south-west of Singhbhum comprises one mass of hills—the Saranda of seven hundred hills, the greater portion of which is under reserved forest. The level land in Singhbhum is confined to the valleys of the South Koel and Suvarnarekha rivers.

The Rajmahal hills form the north-east angle of the plateau and are the only considerable mass of hills which approach the Gangā in its course in that region. Although nowhere do they rise higher than 2,000 feet they present an extremely varied and picturesque topography.

On its eastern margin, the plateau has a height of less than 1,000 feet but the general configuration is still that of an undulating upland.

The Kaimur hills, separated from the rest of the plateau by the valley of the Son, are structurally very different from Chotanagpur.

They are the easternmost termination of the Vindhyan range and form an undulating tableland rising abruptly from the plain in bold and lofty precipices, to eminences of about 1,200 feet above sea level.

THE RIVER SYSTEM

A striking feature of the river system of Bihar is the dominant role of the Gangā. But for a few streams that flow south and east from the Chotanagpur plateau, the whole drainage of Bihar gravitates towards this single waterway. It dominates the scene, as it flows as a stately river for nearly 300 miles through the richest tract of the State, swollen with the tribute of innumerable streams that feed its current. The affluents that feed the Gangā arise from two different watersheds—the Himalayas and the Chotanagpur plateau. The more important left-bank tributaries, such as the Gogra, the Gandak and the Kosi, rise from the Himalayas and are snow-fed perennial streams. There are also a number of other streams which rise from the foothills of the Himalayas and consequently are not snow-fed. With the solitary exception of the Son, all the streams that join the Gangā from the south take their rise from the Chotanagpur plateau. A number of streams also flow south and east from this watershed. The plateau is wholly dependent upon the monsoon rain for the supply of water to the rivers that emanate from it. Consequently, these rivers present a marked contrast to the large Himalayan rivers. 'They are wet-weather streams, born of the mountain storm and dying in the sunshine.' They flow full during the rains, swell to flood proportions, but shrink in summer to mere trickles, or dry up into drifts of sand, broken here and there by stagnant pools. The rivers of the Chotanagpur plateau mostly flow through rugged country. Their banks are usually high and steep, overgrown by low jungle and furrowed with countless small channels by the discharge of surface drainage. River-beds are for the most part rocky, there being little deposition of silt. Ordinarily, therefore, no cultivation is possible on the banks or in the beds of the streams. Where, however, the banks happen to be lower and the valleys broader, land at the river edge is rich and cultivated. Where the soil on the slopes of the valley is rich, terraced agriculture is practised, cultivation being confined to that part of the year when the water is within easy reach. Even during the rains, the rivers continue to flow in fairly well-defined valleys and between definite bluffs.

Floods take place when they suddenly burst into level country in West Bengal and, to a lesser extent, in South Bihar.

None of the rivers that flow down from the plateau to join the Gangā in the north have a large catchment area, and they are obliged to complete their journey all too soon. However sudden and sometimes even violent their rush of water may be, it is but of short duration and even in the plains the rivers overflow their banks but rarely.

The rivers of North Bihar, on the other hand, are well known for their floods and the uncertain nature of their courses. They have a large catchment area. Nourished by melting glaciers and fattened by the heavy monsoon rain, they come down in spate in the rainy season and bring down with them an enormous amount of gravel and sand from the quickly weathering rocks of the Himalayan slopes. After leaving the hills and entering the plains, they overflow their banks and spread far and wide over the countryside. The constant deposition of silt chokes their channels and retards the flow-off, so that they cut through their sandy banks during high floods and flow into fresh courses. A network of constantly changing channels has, therefore, become a conspicuous feature of the rivers of North Bihar. Associated with these shifting channels are the recurrent floods. 'If the river behaves itself, there is God's plenty; but if a big flood comes down, it is good-bye to crop, cattle and home.'

We may now briefly study these rivers under four heads: (*i*) the Gangā; (*ii*) the rivers draining into the Gangā from the North; (*iii*) the rivers draining into the Gangā from the South; and (*iv*) the rivers draining south and east from the Chotanagpur plateau.

THE GANGĀ

After having travelled a distance of over 1,000 miles, the Gangā first impinges on the boundary of Bihar near its confluence with the Karmanasa. The three great affluents—the Gogra, the Gandak, and the Son—join the Gangā not very far from Patna. The Gangā is joined by the Gogra from the north, opposite Sirha, 12 miles north of Arrah; by the Son from the south, near Bihta; and by the Gandak just opposite Patna. Further east, the Gangā is joined from the south by the Punpun at Fatwah in the Patna district. The Harohar and the Kiul join it at Surajgarh in Monghyr, after which it flows north-east to describe a sharp bend on reaching the high land near Monghyr town and turns almost due south. It is here that it is joined by the Burhi Gandak from the north. At Colgong it meets

a low range of hills by which it is diverted northward and almost touches the Kosi, which then joins it four miles downstream. Further east lie the Rajmahal hills which skirt its southern bank.

The Gangā thus flows through Bihar as a broad river in easy channels and through flat landscape, broken only twice by the isolated slopes of the Kharakpur hills and the crests of the Rajmahal hills. It completely bisects Bihar proper, and flows as an immense stream, unbridged through its whole 300-mile course across the State. In consequence of this, communication between North and South Bihar has always been slow, a journey by steamer and train from Patna to Muzaffarpur, only 35 miles away on the other side of the river, taking about 4½ hours. The construction of a rail-road bridge on the Gangā at Mokameh Ghat, which has already begun, will fulfil a long-felt want but will not fully solve the problem of communication between North and South Bihar.

RIVERS DRAINING INTO THE GANGĀ FROM THE NORTH

The principal rivers that join the Gangā from the north are, from west to east, the Gogra, the Gandak, the Burhi Gandak, the Kosi, the Mahananda and their tributaries.

The Gogra flows for about 60 miles along the boundary of the Saran district and Ballia. Its course lies through a maze of 'diaras' which are mostly under Ballia district in U.P. It is liable to overflow its channel and inundate the adjoining country during the rains.

The Gandak is a snow-fed river formed by the union of seven Himalayan streams. It enters Bihar near Tribeni and after a course of about 200 miles through North Bihar, joins the Gangā opposite Patna. A little above its mouth it is spanned by a fine railway bridge on the North-Eastern Railway. A little to the north-west of its confluence with the Gangā and along its bank is situated Sonpur, where every year a great bathing festival is held which is the occasion for the greatest cattle and elephant fair in the world. The Gandak is one of the largest feeders of the Gangā and carries an enormous volume of water. It is, however, protected from its once disastrous floods by an embankment extending downstream from near Bagaha in Champaran to its confluence with the Gangā. The Gandak feeds two important irrigation canals, the Tribeni canal in Champaran and the Saran canal in Saran.

The Burhi Gandak rises in the western extremity of the Sumeswar range. Like the Gandak, it flows from north-west to south-east, and

passes through the districts of Champaran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, and Monghyr. The Burhi Gandak is not a snow-fed stream but has a considerable flow of water throughout the year. It takes an exceedingly meandering route over the level plain and is liable to change its course. Old beds which it has now forsaken can be traced along the adjacent country.

The Baghmati rises in Nepal, north of Kathmandu, and pierces the Mahabharat and Churia ranges before crossing the Nepal Tarai. It enters Bihar in the Muzaffarpur district and soon begins to meander. It follows a course nearly parallel to that of the Burhi Gandak which it ultimately joins near Rusera in Darbhanga. Fed by a number of hill streams, it rises quickly after heavy rains, and as it runs upon a ridge, once the banks are overtopped, large areas are inundated. In the dry season, however, its water is at places only knee-deep.

The Kosi drains the Himalayan snows between Gosainthan and Kanchenjunga. It leaves its mountain home at Chatra and arrives in Bihar as a vast river heavily charged with sandy debris and soon acquires the characteristics of a deltaic river. It runs south through the district of Saharsa with bifurcations and interlacings, and receives the waters of the Kamla-Tilguja rivers and the old Bagmati. After this it takes a bend towards the east, flowing in the bed of one of its old tributaries, the Ghugri, parallel to the Gangã, which it joins south of Kursela. This junction occurred about 150 years ago. The Kosi has really no permanent deep channel, but flows with a small depth over a wide stretch of country, and tears through the flat country in numerous capricious channels. When swollen by heavy rains and melting snow it dashes impetuously down in a tremendous volume of tortured and turbid water, overtops and bursts through its collapsing banks, inundating large areas, making fresh channels for itself, and 'turning fertile fields into arid wastes of sand; sweeping away factories, farms, and villages; and changing the whole face of the country from a fruitful landscape into a wilderness of sand and swamp.' The Kosi is, indeed, notorious for its vagaries and the erratic and fickle nature of its course. The rapidly changing course of the river, however, is qualified by one constant factor: though it may temporarily move back into a drainage which it has missed during its westward swing, the Kosi has been steadily advancing westward and in the process has been lengthening its channel. In 1941 the length of its course from the gorge to the point of its junction with

the Gangā was 160 miles, as compared to 100 miles in 1870. Leaving apart the supposed or probable courses of the Kosi, we have some authentic records of the former channels of the river in comparatively recent times. In 1736 the Kosi flowed a mile to the west of Purnea and joined the Gangā opposite Sahibganj. In the period 1807-39 it flowed east of Dhamdaha and joined the Gangā near Kursela. Between 1840 and 1873 it shifted to the west of Dhamdaha, and in the Revenue Survey map of 1840-47 the Hiran is shown as the main Kosi. During the years 1873-92 it migrated further west. Since then it has moved westward at an average translation rate of about one mile per year and is now moving towards Darbhanga. Embankments are being constructed to confine the river and to protect the surrounding country from annual devastations by flood. There is also an ambitious project, already under way, to construct a barrage not far from its point of emergence from the hills and to utilize its water for irrigation and hydro-electricity.

The Mahananda, the most easterly of the important tributaries of the Gangā in Bihar actually joins the Gangā in West Bengal. It flows through Purnea as a wide meandering stream, with old abandoned beds forming a confusion of lakes along its banks.

RIVERS DRAINING INTO THE GANGĀ FROM THE SOUTH

Principal among the streams that join the Gangā from the south are the Karmanasa, the Son, the Punpun, the Phalgu, the Sakri and the Kiul. Of these the Son is by far the most important. It has its source in the Amarkantak hills of Madhya Pradesh. Its total length through Bihar is 145 miles, and its only important tributary is the North Koel in Palamau district. In its lower portion, the bed of the Son is two to three miles wide, which in the summer season is an enormous stretch of drifting golden sand with an insignificant silver streak of water. The Son is of great agricultural importance. It is the mainstay of very important irrigation works in the State. A big weir is the starting point of the Son canals from Dehri-on-Son.

The other rivers of South Bihar are also extensively utilized for irrigation through a complicated and ingenious system of 'pynes', i.e. long narrow canals, and 'ahars', i.e. shallow catchment basins.

RIVERS DRAINING SOUTH AND EAST FROM THE CHOTANAGPUR PLATEAU

The principal rivers draining south from the Chotanagpur plateau are only two, the South Koel and the Suvarnarekha, while the

number draining east is much larger. These rivers from south to north are the Kasai, the Damodar, the Barakar, the Ajay, the Mor, the Brahmani, the Gumani and others. The four last-named are unimportant, and even the other rivers have only their upper courses in Bihar, flowing for the most part over rocky beds.

The South Koel rises a few miles west of Ranchi, on the northern slope of the same ridge as the Suvarnarekha and very close to its source. It follows a winding and circuitous southerly course to join the Sankh in Gangpur.

The Suvarnarekha plunges 320 feet from the Ranchi plateau near the junction of the Hazaribagh and Manbhum districts, and at Hundrughagh forms one of the most picturesque falls in the State. It flows in a south-easterly direction and near its entry into Dhalbhum is joined from the right by the Kharkai, which brings with it also the waters of the Sanjai. Just south-east of their confluence is situated the famous industrial city of Jamshedpur. Apart from the last four or five miles of its course through Bihar, its flow is rapid and its bed is for the most part rocky and full of treacherous quicksands.

The Damodar is the most important river of the Chotanagpur plateau. It rises in Palamau, 25 miles west of the boundary of Hazaribagh and flows eastward in a structural trough between the plateaus of Ranchi and Hazaribagh. Numerous hill torrents rush down to join it from either side but the only affluents worthy of note are the Bokaro, the Konar, and the Barakar. Because of the removal of natural vegetation from its catchment area, the run-off ratio is exceedingly high. During the rains the Damodar is therefore liable to severe floods which have frequently done great damage in the lower portion of the valley in West Bengal. The Damodar Valley Project was conceived particularly to control these floods and also to yield the simultaneous benefits of irrigation, power and navigation.

CLIMATE

Climatically Bihar lies in a belt of transition between the wetter portion of Bengal and drier Uttar Pradesh to the west. The heat of the summer is neither so intense as in the drier west nor so moist and enervating as in Bengal. Hot westerly winds start in March and last into April and May; but in April and May light, damp, easterly winds blow intermittently, and afternoon storms accompanied with rain take the place of the rainless dust-storms of Uttar Pradesh.

The monsoon rains begin a little later than in West Bengal and end a little earlier, so that the rainfall, though much less than in Bengal, is considerably higher than in U.P. In winter the conditions are more akin to those of U.P. though the rainfall is less and the temperature slightly higher.

The climate of Bihar can best be described according to three seasons into which the year is divided—the hot-weather season from March to May, the rainy season from June to October and the cold-weather season from November to February.

The Hot-Weather Season. The period from March to May is characterized by great heat and aridity. In March the mean temperature varies between 75° and 80°F, the mean maximum is about 90°F and the mean minimum between 60° and 65°F. In April and May, at nearly all stations, the thermometer rises above 100°F for some hours during the day. The hottest month is May when the mean temperature exceeds 90°F everywhere except in the extreme north and on the plateaus of Ranchi and Hazaribagh. These plateaus remain throughout this period the coolest part in the State. A characteristic feature of the season is the afternoon or evening storms which burst after the heat of the day and form the chief source of rain at this time of year. They are much less frequent in March and April, and consequently the rainfall in the earlier months of the season is negligible. The rainfall during the hot season is more abundant in the east than in the west and is most abundant in north-east Purnea (about 10"). The entire eastern and south-eastern boundary of the State receives an average rainfall of more than 5 inches, and there is a continuous decrease westward. Thus the rainfall at Purnea is 6.17", at Muzaffarpur 3.22" and at Siwan 2.27"; at Rajmahal 5.93" at Monghyr 3.40", at Patna 2.44" and at Buxar 1.32". Similarly on the plateau we have a rainfall of 5.44" at Naya Dumka, 3.84" at Hazaribagh and 1.72" at Daltonganj.

The hot-weather rainfall benefits mango and 'litchi' fruits and also helps the timely preparation of fields for the autumn (bhadai) harvest.

The Rainy Season. With the burst of the monsoon in mid-June there is a sudden and complete change in weather. The amount of rainfall increases rapidly. Patna, which has an average of 1.67" in May, receives 8.12" in June and 11.94" in July. Conditions in August are similar to those in July, and these two months form the rainiest months of the year when nearly 50% of the annual rain falls.

3

The rainfall of the season is derived mainly from the Bay of Bengal branch of the monsoon which, in the north, is deflected by the great Himalayan barrier and sweeps westward up the Gangetic valley, or further south is precipitated by the highlands of the Chotanagpur plateau. We find, therefore, a relatively wet belt along the eastern fringe of the plateau and another belt of heavy rainfall in the submontane region along the northern boundary of the State.

The monsoon rainfall is heavier in the Chotanagpur plateau than in the Gangetic lowlands. Roughly speaking, it is more than 45" over the plateau and less than 45" over the plain, but the area of heaviest rainfall (Purnea) is in the plain. There is an almost steady decrease of rainfall in passing from east to west up the valley, and from north to south from the foot of the Himalayas towards the Gangā. In the northern part of the plateau, where the influence of the westerly branch of the monsoon is not so pronounced as further south, the rainfall decreases from east to west, but south of Hazaribagh there is a marked increase westwards. The area of minimum rainfall lies in the west-central part of the State including Saran and large parts of Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga, the whole of Patna division, Bhagalpur and Monghyr and a large part of Hazaribagh and Palamau.

One of the immediate effects of the monsoon rains in June is to lower the temperature. The mean temperature at Gaya in May is 92°F, in June 89·9°, in July 85·5°, and in August 84·1°; at Ranchi there is a fall from 86·9° in May to 83·1° in June, 79·0° in July and 75·3° in August, in all a total fall of more than 11°F. In North Bihar this fall is much less marked. Motihari has a mean temperature of 85·6° in May and 83.8° in August, Purnea a May temperature of 84·6° and an August temperature of 83.8°. Because of the high humidity, the decrease in temperature means but slight physical comfort except on the high plateau. With the slackening of the rains in September, there is a general tendency for the maximum temperature to rise, but mean minimum temperatures are generally lower than in August.

The Cold-Weather Season. The cessation of the rains in the middle of October is followed by a period of warm, sunny weather. But even though the sun shines, the temperature goes on steadily falling, and in November the cold season begins. The mean temperature is roughly 70°F in November and is even less on the high plateaus of Ranchi and Hazaribagh, the mean minimum temperature varying between 55° and 60°. In December, the mean temperature falls by six to eight degrees. Days are less warm and nights definitely cold.

The mean minimum temperature at Patna is 61°F in November and 51.8° in December; at Ranchi 57° in November and 46·5° in December. January is very much like December. December is the coldest month in the plateau but January in the plains. In the higher reaches of the plateau there is sometimes hoar frost which does damage to crops and young trees.

The cold-weather season is on the whole characterized by clear, cloudless and sunny weather. The little rain that falls is associated with cyclonic storms that travel eastward along a fairly well-defined belt down the Indo-Gangetic plain from Persia and Afghanistan and usually die out before they reach West Bengal. They bring enough cloud but light rain to the districts over which they pass. Except in the extreme south-west of Bihar, the rainfall hardly reaches even 3 inches and is only half as much over a large part of the Gangetic lowlands. But this rainfall, though small in absolute amount, is of considerable agricultural significance, for upon it depends in large measure the richness of the 'rabi' harvest. The effectiveness of these falls is further increased by their comparatively low intensity and the low average temperatures.

The amount of rainfall, however, does not give a complete picture of the amount of condensed vapour available for plant life. The air in the early hours of the morning is fully saturated and there is a copious dew formation which performs the function of gentle rain by moistening the vegetation and greatly benefits cold-weather crops.

ANNUAL RAINFALL

The normal rainfall varies from 40" in the west-central part to more than 60" in the submontane region in the north, particularly Purnea and the extreme south-west. Over the greater part of the plain, however, the rainfall is less than 50" while most of the plateau enjoys a rainfall of more than 50", rising in the south-west to more than 60". The rainfall in the plateau is thus heavier than in the plain.

The period from June to October is the season of heavy rain throughout Bihar. It is during this period that 85 to 90 per cent of the annual rain falls.

A factor of great significance is the variability of rainfall from year to year, particularly of the monsoon rainfall. Unfortunately, variability is greatest in those months in which constancy is most desired. The greatest value is attached to the departing rains, called

Hathia (from the constellation called Hastā) in October and they are also the most liable to fail. When these rains fail, not only is the standing rice crop ruined but there is not enough moisture in the soil for the sowing of the cold-weather crops.

IRRIGATION

About a quarter of the net cropped area is ordinarily supported by irrigation in Bihar, and nearly five and a half million acres are annually irrigated from various sources. The need and facilities for irrigation, however, differ widely in the different parts of the State. About three-quarters of the irrigated area is confined to the west-central part, which is the area of minimum rainfall and maximum variability. The greater part of the North Gangetic plain receives a higher rainfall than the South, and the supply of moisture is supplemented by the overspill of rivers. In Saran and the southern half of Muzaffarpur, however, conditions are different; the rainfall is lower and the rivers are embanked. Irrigation, therefore, assumes greater importance in this area.

In the South Gangetic plain the annual rainfall is less than 50", decreasing to about 40" towards the west, and is liable to great variations. There is hardly any spill irrigation, and on account of the slope the drainage is rapid. Irrigation, therefore, is an important feature in the agriculture of this area. The Son canal system taking off at Dehri irrigates about 800,000 acres (mostly rice) in the Patna division. But over and above this, there exists an extensive system of indigenous irrigation works consisting of long narrow canals called 'pynes' and shallow catchment basins called 'ahars'. 'Pynes' form an especially elaborate system in Patna, Gaya and Bhagalpur, and 'ahars' are an exceedingly important source of irrigation in Gaya, Patna and South Monghyr. Nearly 70 per cent of the irrigated area of the State is to be found in the South Gangetic plain.

In the Chotanagpur plateau the rainfall normally exceeds 50 inches but on account of the broken nature of the country it is rapidly drained off by the streams and rivulets. Consequently there exists everywhere a system of damming up valleys by a succession of bunds, thus forming small tanks which are utilized for the irrigation of the all-important rice crop. But there are large tracts where little has been done to utilize the sources available and where, as in Ranchi and Hazaribagh, a large part of the crop is dependent upon the vagaries of the rainfall.

Irrigation in Bihar is primarily for the rice crop, which alone is responsible for nearly two-thirds of the irrigated area of the State. The other important irrigated crops are wheat, barley, sugar-cane and maize, but comparatively few facilities exist for the irrigation of these crops. The area under irrigation by Government canals in 1950-51 was only 900,000 acres, which is expected to increase to 1,700,000 acres by 1955-56.

Natural Vegetation and Forest Resources

The natural vegetation of Bihar may be said to be deciduous forest, with patches of grassland in very limited areas. Much of the original vegetation cover, however, has been destroyed as a result of the extension of cultivation, reckless and wasteful cutting and unrestricted grazing by animals.

Only about 20 per cent of the total area of the State is under forest. Most of it lies in the Chotanagpur plateau. The largest forest areas occur in the districts of Hazaribagh, Singhbhum, Palamau and Ranchi, which together account for more than three-quarters of the total forest area in Bihar. On the other hand, the most populous region of the Gangetic plain contains only about 2,000 square miles of forest of very poor quality.

The forests of the State may be divided into (*i*) moist deciduous, and (*ii*) dry deciduous, the line of separation being roughly the 50-inch ishohyet (or line of equal rainfall). In the latter, the timber is poor; there are patches of 'sal' but bamboos and 'sabai' grass occur extensively. In the Himalayan Tarai in Champaran the most valuable trees are 'sal' and 'shisham', but bamboos, 'narkat' reed and 'sabai' grass are also widespread. The Chotanagpur tract forms a rich 'sal' area, the best timbers being found in Singhbhum. Other timbers are 'paisal', 'tun', 'karam', and so on. 'Kusum', 'palas', and 'bair' are widespread and are utilized for the cultivation of lac. Chotanagpur is the leading producer of lac, not only in India but in the whole world. The two principal centres of manufacture are Jhalda and Balarampur. 'Mahua' is one of the common trees and yields huge quantities of sweet, fragrant flowers which, besides being eaten as food, are used for the distillation of country liquor. Its wood, like that of 'jamun' and 'gular', does not rot in water and it is therefore widely used as a lining for wells. Its dry leaves are used for 'biris' (country cigarettes).

The plateau tract was once thickly forested, but reckless destruction

has gone on for a long time and much of what is classed as forest is mere scrub. The most unfortunate effects of forest denudation are to be seen in the Ranchi and Hazaribagh plateaus where the removal of natural vegetation has resulted in soil erosion of a serious character over large areas. Further, these plateaus form the catchment basins of several streams which, as a consequence, not only easily dry up during summer but also bring disastrous monsoon floods to West Bengal, Orissa and sometimes to the South Gangetic plain of Bihar.

As a result of the Bihar Private Forests Act, 1946, nearly all the forests have now come under government control. Efforts are also being made to bring more areas under forest by planned afforestation. Forest industries are being developed. Several saw-mills have been set up in the forest areas to convert logs into sawn timber, including a modern saw-mill at Chakradharpur in Singhbhum. The bamboo forests of Palamau Division have been leased to Rohtas Paper Mills at Dalmianagar. Bamboo and 'sabai' grass are exported to West Bengal paper mills.

Agriculture

Though full of mineral resources, Bihar is essentially an agricultural State. About 82 per cent of its population depends on agriculture for its livelihood. The Gangetic plain of Bihar, particularly North Bihar, forms one of the richest and most fertile agricultural tracts in India and grows a great variety of crops. The Chotanagpur plateau, on the other hand, is a region of irregular surface and poor soil, and is agriculturally far less productive than the plains.

Bihar lies climatically, as we know, in a belt of transition between U.P. and deltaic Bengal, and the crops grown are naturally a mixture of those cultivated in the two regions. Rice is still the dominant crop, but maize, wheat, barley, gram, linseed, millets and other crops which can be grown more profitably in areas of comparatively light rainfall begin to get more and more important as we move from east to west. Jute, a crop of the hot, moist lowlands, survives only in Purnea. The character of the harvests, too, is essentially similar. In place of the two well-marked seasonal crops, 'kharif' and 'rabi' of U.P., we have three agricultural harvests in Bihar, namely, 'bhadai' (autumn), 'aghani' (winter), and 'rabi' (spring). The 'bhadai' harvest consists mainly of quick-maturing crops sown in May-June and harvested in the month of 'Bhado' (August-September). Autumn rice, maize, millets and jute form the main crops of this harvest.

'Bhadai' is more important in the plain north of the Gangā than in the south, mainly because of jute in Purnea and maize in the region south of the Burhi Gandak. In the Chotanagpur plateau, the area under 'bhadai' is remarkably large. This is because of the inclusion of a considerable area under rice grown on the third-class rice lands which is not 'bhadai' in the strict sense of the term. Other 'bhadai' crops include maize, 'gora' rice, millets and quick-maturing pulses like 'urid' and 'mung'.

The 'aghani' harvest consists essentially of the winter rice crop which alone occupies more than nine-tenths of the total area under this harvest. 'Aghani' rice is sown in mid-June, transplanted between July and mid-August and harvested usually in the month of 'aghan' (end of November and December). Other crops of this harvest are sugar-cane, 'til' 'surguja' and 'jowar'. Sugar-cane is really an annual crop sown in February and reaped from November to April. The importance of this harvest is uniformly great over the entire plain, the chief exception being North Monghyr.

The 'rabi' harvest includes a large number of crops, such as, wheat, barley, gram, 'khesāri', peas, lentils, 'arhar', linseed, rape, mustard and others. The crops are sown in October-November and harvested in March. 'Rabi' occupies large areas in the plain, but a considerable portion of it consists of inferior catchcrops. 'Rabi' is unimportant on the plateau, as the upland soil is poor and the moisture insufficient for cold-weather crops.

RICE

In acreage as well as production, rice occupies a pre-eminent position amongst the crops of Bihar and covers more than half the total sown area. In 1950-51 it occupied nearly 14·4 million acres out of a total sown area of 27 million.

Three crops of rice are grown—summer rice, autumn rice, and winter rice, named according to the season in which they are harvested. But more than nine-tenths is winter rice and most of the remainder autumn rice.

Nearly two-thirds of the rice area of Bihar is found in the plain and only about one-third in the Chotanagpur plateau. The optimum conditions are found in the plain north of the Gangā, where the area of greatest concentration lies in the triangle of land between the Burhi Gandak on the west and the Kosi in the east. This consists of a vast low-lying plain intersected by numerous streams and marshes

and is subject to annual inundation. The soil is predominantly clay or clayey loam, and the rainfall above 50". Another area of dense rice-cultivation lies in the South Gangetic plain where the crop is mainly dependent upon irrigation.

While the area under rice in the plateau is half of that in the plain, its regional importance is much greater. In some of the districts it occupies about three-fourths of the total sown area (in Singhbhum 80 per cent). Rice in the plateau is primarily cultivated in the valleys or 'dons', divided into first, second and third class according to situation. The first-class or the best rice-lands are found in the beds of valleys, the second on the natural slopes of rivers and the third are made from artificial terraces. The kind of rice grown becomes coarser and more quick-maturing as we move from the moisture-retaining lowlands to the more precarious higher terraces. The two most important rice-growing districts in the plateau are Ranchi and Santhal Parganas.

The total out-turn of rice in Bihar is about 2·6 million tons, but figures of production are to be accepted with some caution. In the case of rice, there is a further complication: the produce is harvested in the form of paddy and for statistical purposes is converted into husked rice on a fixed conversion ratio of 5:2.

MAIZE

After rice, maize is the most extensive crop grown in Bihar. It occupied about 1·9 million acres in 1952-53. Bihar is, after Uttar Pradesh, the largest producer of maize in India. The most important area of maize cultivation in Bihar lies roughly south and west of the Burhi Gandak river, covering areas of Saran, South Champaran, South Muzaffarpur, South Darbhanga, and North Monghyr and is continued to the east of the river in South Saharsa, North Bhagalpur, and South-West Purnea. This tract consists principally of 'bhith' or upland and 'diara' lands, and the soil is predominantly light and sandy loam ('bālsundarī'). Both these conditions are eminently suited to maize. In Chotanagpur, maize is grown in almost every village on the 'bāri' or homestead land, primarily for home consumption.

Maize forms an important article of food for the poorer people in Bihar. The corn on the green cob is lightly baked and is eaten with great relish by rich and poor alike. The cobs are in great demand in towns and when placed early on the market, fetch a fairly good price. In the Gangetic 'diaras', therefore, an early crop is raised and

is available several weeks before the crop grown in the ordinary way.

WHEAT

Wheat is the most valuable of the food crops grown during the 'rabi' season. The area under wheat in Bihar in 1952-53 was about 1·5 million acres.

Wheat is essentially a crop of the plains, soil conditions in the Chotanagpur plateau being generally unfavourable. In North Bihar, wheat is mainly cultivated south and west of the Bagmati river; north and east of it its cultivation is sparser, for here we are in the low, inundated country given mainly to 'aghani' rice. The largest concentration is to be found in North Monghyr where the soil is rich loam and is annually fertilized by deposits of silt.

In the South Gangetic plain, wheat is grown under very different conditions. Here deficiency and not excess of moisture is the limiting factor, and the crop is dependent to a large extent upon irrigation, except in the lands annually flooded by the Gangā (as in North Shahabad) or in the heavy clay loams which retain moisture (e.g. in the 'tal' area in North Patna). Just as North Monghyr forms the most important wheat-producing area in North Bihar, so does Shahabad form the most important wheat-area in the South. Other important areas are Gaya, Patna and Saran districts.

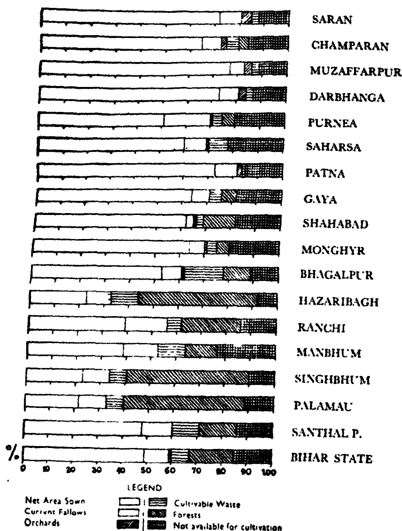
BARLEY

Bihar is the second largest producer of barley in India, the first being Uttar Pradesh. This crop occupies approximately a million acres, mainly in the districts of Saran, Champaran, and Darbhanga, which together contain nearly two-thirds of Bihar's total area under barley and form, together with the neighbouring districts of Uttar Pradesh, the main barley-producing region in India. Barley thrives best on light, sandy and porous soils, but it is a hardy crop and can withstand an excess or deficiency in soil moisture better than wheat. It can be grown, with comparatively little preparation and no manure, on soils considered too poor for wheat. Further, it can ripen at its usual time even if sown late. These characteristics are of great agricultural significance. Its comparative hardiness is also responsible for its popularity as a mixture with a great variety of crops.

In Chotanagpur, barley is everywhere an unimportant crop, except in the valley of the North Koel in Palamau.

Pictograph II

LAND UTILIZATION IN BIHAR



GRAM

Of the various pulses cultivated in Bihar, gram is the most important. It covered an area of 1·5 million acres in 1952-53. From the point of view of acreage, it sometimes ranks third and sometimes fourth amongst the crops of Bihar. The great gram-producing region of Bihar lies in the South Gangetic plain and in North Monghyr, where the rainfall is low, the land lies high and the soil is well-drained. The districts of Shahabad, Patna, Gaya, and Monghyr form the area of major production, and together account for more than two-thirds of the total acreage and production. In Chotanagpur, little gram is grown except in Palamau.

OILSEEDS

Oilseeds are the most extensively cultivated of all cash crops of Bihar. They include a variety of crops which together occupy about 850,000 acres, the more important of them being linseed, rape, mustard, 'til', 'surgujā', and castor. Where one does not grow, another flourishes; thus every area has some oilseed crop. While linseed, a crop of the deep, moisture-retaining heavy loams is almost entirely confined to the Gangetic plain, 'til' and 'surgujā', typically poor-soil crops, flourish only on the plateau. Rape and mustard, while preferring the plain to the plateau, show a more equitable distribution.

SUGAR-CANE

Although the area under sugar-cane in Bihar is only about 4 lakh acres, it occupies an exceedingly important place in the economic life of the State. Taking India as a whole, Bihar ranks second in sugar-cane acreage and production, the first being Uttar Pradesh.

The cane-growing area of Bihar is fairly well defined, being largely restricted to the western portion of the plain. The divisions of Tirhut and Patna—one north and the other south of the Gangā—together contain more than four-fifths of the total State acreage. Tirhut, with nearly two-thirds of the total Bihar cane area, forms the premier sugar-cane tract. It is here that most sugar factories are located and conditions for the growth of cane are most favourable. The average rainfall is between 45" and 55" and the soil is plentifully supplied with lime. Well-drained calcareous (containing limestone) soil produces canes rich in sucrose content. In North Bihar sugar-cane has to some extent taken the place of the old indigo crop, and considerable quantities are, therefore, grown on large estates

by up-to-date methods and under scientific supervision. In the South Gangetic plain, on the other hand, small-holdings are the rule. The chief limiting factor in the South is the lack of adequate irrigation facilities during the dry period.

JUTE

Jute is the only fibre of any importance grown in Bihar. In 1952-53 it occupied 460,000 acres. Its cultivation is extremely localized, more than four-fifths of the acreage being confined to Purnea district where it is the crop next in importance to rice and is by far the most important cash crop.

OTHER CROPS

Other important crops include: a large variety of pulses such as 'arhar', 'khesāri', 'masur', peas, 'urid' and 'mung'; tobacco, grown mainly in localized tracts in South Muzaffarpur, South Darbhanga, North Monghyr and Western Purnea; fruits and vegetables, grown chiefly in Tirhut, Patna and Ranchi. Cultivation of vegetables on an extensive scale goes on mostly in the neighbourhood of large towns where a local demand and marketing facilities exist. Bihar is an important producer of potatoes which are particularly valued for seed purposes; thus Patna and Biharsharif town form two of the biggest markets for seed potatoes in India.

The table below gives the latest available figures for the main crops of Bihar:—

ESTIMATED AREA UNDER DIFFERENT CROPS IN 1954-55

IN THOUSAND ACRES

Rice	..	21,700
Wheat	..	1,433
Maize	..	1,543
Barley	..	654
Gram	..	806
Sugar-cane	..	327
Jute	..	270

Industries and Industrial Centres

Important industries in Bihar include the huge Tata Iron and Steel Works and associated industries at Jamshedpur, the fertilizer factory at Sindri, the cement, sugar, paper, aluminium, mica and copper industries, refractories, glass, and shellac factories and others.

Industries in Bihar show a definite tendency to be located in certain

areas, and it is possible to demarcate a number of zones in which one or more industries predominate. These zones give a fairly good picture of the regional distribution of industries in the State.

1. In the extreme north is a narrow strip of country which contains nearly two-thirds of the rice mills of Bihar. These mills lie in the richest rice-growing tract in Bihar, but paddy for husking is supplied also by the adjoining Nepal Tarai. Important centres are Jaynagar and Nirmali in Darbhanga; Raxaul, Adapur and Narkatiaganj in Champaran; Sitamarhi and Bairgania in Muzaffarpur; and Forbesganj, Kishanganj, Jogbani and others in Purnea. It must be remembered, however, that the major portion of the rice produced in Bihar is still hand-pounded.

2. Contiguous with and slightly overlapping the belt of rice mills in Champaran, is the zone in which most of the sugar factories of Bihar are located. This zone contains nearly nine-tenths of the workers engaged in this industry and is responsible for about four-fifths of the total production. Most of the factories lie in north-central Saran (Gopalganj, Siwan, Masrakh, Marhowrah), in Champaran (Motihari, Bagaha, Narkatiaganj), in Darbhanga (Darbhanga, Sakri, Samastipur) and in Muzaffarpur.

3. There are a number of towns on the south bank of the Gangā which have long been important trading centres and where light industries have developed. In this zone are included oil mills near Sahibganj, Bhagalpur and Sultanganj, a large tobacco factory and the hand-made gun factories at Monghyr, the silk industry of Bhagalpur, and a shoe factory, a cycle factory, an electric lamp works, glass factories, oil mills and other smaller industries located near Patna. Katihar, north of the Gangā, is an important centre of the jute industry in Purnea.

4. The valley of the Son from its confluence with the North Koel up to Dehri, forms an important industrial area. Dalmianagar is the industrial focus of this region and contains a large number of factories controlled by Rohtas Industries Ltd. These include: (*i*) industries based on forest products, such as, paper, plywood, and cardboard manufactures; (*ii*) cement-making, based upon the limestone of the Kaimur hills, as well as manufactures of cement-concrete pipes and poles and corrugated asbestos-cement sheets; (*iii*) the sugar industry; (*iv*) chemical industries, and other manufactures. Japla in Palamau is another important centre of cement manufacture, and Kalyanpur in Shahabad also has a cement factory.

5. The Bihar mica belt lies mostly in Hazaribagh. There is no real manufacturing, but only processing, which is almost entirely dependent on hand labour. Most of the factories are located in the vicinity of Giridih, Kodarma, and Jhumri Tilaiya.

6. The Damodar Valley, with its wealth of coal and power available from the dams and the Bokaro thermal power station of the DVC, naturally bids fair to be one of the most important industrial areas in Bihar. There are a number of coking plants near Jharia and Giridih, and the presence of clays has resulted in the manufacture of fire-bricks and tiles between Jharia and Barakar. A fuel research institute has been set up at Digwadih, ten miles south of Dhanbad. A giant fertilizer factory, producing ammonium sulphate, and a power plant have been set up at Sindri on the banks of the Damodar fourteen miles downstream from Dhanbad. Sindri has also a new cement factory and a super-phosphate factory. There is a cement factory at Khelari (Ranchi) and an aluminium factory at Muri (near Ranchi).

7. Singhbhum, the richest mineral tract in India, is the seat of heavy metal industries. Jamshedpur, at the junction of the Suvarnarekha and the Kharkai, is the seat of the famous Tata Iron and Steel Works and a number of satellite industries such as tinplate, wire, cable, and agricultural-implement factories, iron foundries, engineering works and railway workshops. The only copper smelter in India is at Maubhandar, where the Indian Copper Corporation utilizes copper ore from the mines at Mushabani. There is a large cement factory at Jhinkapani, and a number of engineering works at Chakradharpur.

It may be noted that industrialization and urbanization have not really made much progress in Bihar. Out of a total population of 40·2 millions (1951), only about 2·7 millions live in towns. The urban-rural ratio is 1:14. The two most important cities, Patna and Jamshedpur had, in round figures, a population of 283,000 and 218,000 respectively. While Patna is an ancient city with a long historical past, Jamshedpur is in every sense modern and essentially a creation of the iron and steel industry. Other towns which have a population of more than one lakh are Gaya, Bhagalpur and Ranchi.

Population

According to the census of 1951 Bihar had a population of a little more than 40·2 millions. The average density is 575 persons per

square mile, but the population is so unequally distributed between the two physical divisions of the State that in parts of the northern lowland the density rises to nearly 1,200 persons per square mile. The highest density is found in the district of Saran (1,182) and the lowest in Palamau (201).

The density of every district based on area figures supplied by the Surveyor-General of India is given below:—

DISTRICT	DENSITY	DISTRICT	DENSITY
Saran	1,182	Saharsa (sub-dist.)	625
Patna	1,168	Shahabad	610
Muzaffarpur	1,167	Purnea	505
Darbhanga	1,127	Purulia (sub-dist.)	466
Dhanbad (sub-dist.)	924	Santhal Parganas	426
Monghyr	717	Singhbhum	328
Champaran	708	Hazaribagh	276
Gaya	664	Ranchi	260
Bhagalpur (sub-dist.)	654	Palamau	201

In a State like Bihar where industry has made but little headway, the distribution of population is directly related to the natural facilities available for cultivation. The most important single factor is not rainfall or the facilities for irrigation but the relief of the land, which determines both the extent of land available for cultivation and the agricultural productivity of the soil. Nearly three-fourths of the population are concentrated in the level and well-cultivated Gangetic lowlands, and only about one-fourth is found in the broken and hilly Chotanagpur plateau. The two most populous districts on the plateau are Manbhum and Santhal Parganas — the districts where the percentage of cultivable land to the total area is the highest. In Manbhum, in addition, there are the coalfields of Dhanbad where the density rises to 924 persons per square mile. In the districts of Hazaribagh and Ranchi the density declines to less than 300.

As between the plain north and south of the Gangā, the disparity is much less marked than between the plain and the plateau. North Bihar is one of the most congested tracts in India, the density in Saran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga exceeding 1,100. In Champaran, though the population is sparse in the submontane strip in the north-west, it exceeds a thousand per square mile in the richly cultivated and well-irrigated thanas towards the east. The density is equally high in North Monghyr. The dense population in the west of North Bihar is, however, balanced by a comparatively low population in Saharsa and Purnea, particularly in the zone ravaged by the Kosi river.

Hills and jungles, so rare in North Bihar, impose a limit on human settlement in the plain south of the Gangā. The northern portion of this plain is highly cultivated and densely populated, but towards the south, hills and ridges run out from the plateau and the density rapidly declines. The most populous district in South Bihar is Patna, where the density is as high as the densest tract in North Bihar, but all the other districts have a scantier population. In Gaya the population is dense towards the north where the soil is fertile and a considerable area is protected by irrigation, but towards the hilly south the density is low. An even more marked variation between the northern and southern parts is to be found in Shahabad. The density exceeds 900 in the flat, fertile and well-irrigated tracts of Sadar subdivision but is less than 400 in the Bhabua subdivision where the Kaimur hills permit only scanty cultivation.

It must be emphasized that on the plateau the population, though much less in actual density than in the plain, presses no less heavily upon the resources of the soil. If we calculate the density on the basis of cultivated area, we shall find that it is as high as in some of the most densely populated parts of the plain. Even if we take into account the mining and industrial centres and the forest products available to the people of the plateau, we have to remember that only a small proportion of the cultivated land is really first class and a large part of the rice crop is unaided by irrigation.

The overall per capita availability of cultivated land is 0·55 acre and in the most crowded areas only 0·39 acre. Cultivated land per head of the agricultural population is 0·64 acre and the maximum possible, including culturable area not at present cultivated, is only 0·88 acre.

About 86 per cent of the population are directly dependent on agriculture and about 35 per cent of the agricultural population are cultivators of land wholly or mainly unowned, and cultivating labourers.

Transport

Waterways. Before the introduction of railways, rivers carried a large part of the traffic. The coming in of the railways sounded the death-knell of the riverine traffic and important centres of trade on the Gangā and particularly on the junction of rivers (e.g., Patna) became decadent. The inland waterways are now of negligible importance in comparison with roads and railways. The Gangā provides

the main artery of navigation and is navigable throughout the year for both steamer and country-boat traffic. The other navigable rivers are the Gogra, the Gandak, and the Burhi Gandak. Country-boats ply on all these rivers, but big country-boats and steamers ply normally only in the Gangā and the Gogra. Revelganj on the Gogra, Lalganj and Hajipur on the Gandak, and Khagaria and Rusera on the Burhi Gandak, are some of the important trade-centres which coordinate the water transport of the State.

There is a regular steamer service along the Gangā and the Gogra. There are altogether 30 stations on the Gangā, between Buxar in the west and Rajmahal in the east. A regular service plies between Patna (Digha) and Goalando. The traffic is mostly in foodgrains, oil-seeds, gur and timber. A regular steamer service is also maintained at Patna and Mokameh Ghat to connect South Bihar with North Bihar.

The Son canals serve as a useful local waterway especially for the rafting of bamboos, poles and sugar-cane, but navigation of these canals has not been a success.

Railways. As a result of the re-grouping of the Indian railways in April 1952, the Oudh-Tirhut Railway of North Bihar now forms part of the North Eastern Railway. Similarly, the former East Indian and Bengal Nagpur Railways, which served the South Gangetic plain and Chotanagpur respectively, now come under the Eastern Railway.

In North Bihar, railway facilities are inadequate, and in the Kosi-affected areas of Saharsa and Darbhanga the transport system has become disorganized by the recurrent floods and changes in the course of the river. The population in Tirhut division is dense, and railways carry an unusually heavy load of traffic. In North Bihar, railways run mostly parallel to the courses of the rivers, mainly because of the difficulty of constructing bridges and the danger of interference with riverine drainage by railway embankments. As a result, communication between important towns (e.g. Motihari to Chapra, Muzaffarpur to Darbhanga) is long and tedious.

The South Gangetic plain has much better rail facilities. Three lines starting from Calcutta and passing through Sahibganj, Madhupur and Gomoh converge on to this plain and provide it with a choice of routes to Calcutta. The Son is bridged at two places—at Dehri and Koilwar—but there is no bridge over the Gangā, and communication between North and South Bihar is slow. As already

mentioned, however, a bridge is now being constructed at Mokameh Ghat.

In the Chotanagpur plateau, railways naturally follow the terrain. The line from Asansol to Son East Bank via Daltonganj takes advantage of the Damodar Valley, while the line connecting Calcutta with Nagpur via Tatanagar follows strictly the valleys of the Suvarnarekha, Sanjai and South Koel rivers. Extensive rail development has naturally taken place in the coal-mining area of the Damodar valley, especially in the Jharia and Raniganj coalfields, where the requirements of local industries and the need for distribution of coal in all directions have made this imperative. Then again in Singhbhum, railway lines connect Jamshedpur with the coal-mining areas in the north and the iron-ore mines in the south. Jamshedpur has also direct rail connexion with Patna and Gaya and Son East Bank. Outside these areas, there are large vacant spaces where few railway facilities exist, and these include large parts of Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Palamau, and the Rajmahal hills. It is important to note that the mica-mining areas in Hazaribagh are not directly served by any railway system and that Kodarma and Giridih railway stations really lie outside the mining belt.

In North Bihar the railway lines are mostly metre-gauge, in the plain south of the Gangā mostly broad-gauge excepting some north-to-south narrow-gauge lines, and on the plateau mostly broad-gauge.

Roads. Bihar has about 32,000 miles of road, of which only about 16 per cent are metalled. More than half the mileage lies in North Bihar. Here dense population, inadequate rail facilities and the requirements of the sugar industry have resulted in a comparatively dense network towards the west, but the eastern half is still poorly provided with roads. The construction and repair of roads in North Bihar present a difficult problem; road-building materials are scarce, large areas are subject to floods and annual inundation, while traffic (especially by bullock carts) is heavy and increasing. The roads being mostly unmetalled, many of them become impassable during the rains.

In the plain south of the Gangā, the more important towns are fairly well provided with good roads, but metalled roads are frequently interrupted by unmetalled stretches.

The Chotanagpur plateau is remarkably well supplied with good roads, built principally during the war period. The Grand Trunk Road cuts across the plateau, passing through Dhanbad, Barhi, Dehri and

Sasaram; but in addition, there are fine roads connecting the more important towns such as Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Chaibassa, Purulia, Dhanbad, Daltonganj and others. Ranchi is connected with Patna by an all-metalled road. Road development in the plateau has been greatly aided by the abundance of road-building materials and the comparative difficulty of constructing railways to serve the interior.

Section B. Historical Geography: Historical and Administrative from Prehistoric Times to A.D. 1200

The territory covered by the State of Bihar today did not bear its present name in the ancient period. The name 'Bihar' was given by the Muslim invaders, who were struck by the large number of monasteries (vihāras) they saw, especially in the vicinity of Odantpuri, the modern Biharsharif.

In the early Vedic period, the Aryans knew only of small states. Several kingdoms like the Kārusha, Magadha, Aṅga, Vaiśālī existed in this part of the country now known as Bihar. Aryans and Vedic literature may have first entered 'Videha' or northern Bihar. This name Videha appears first in the Brāhmaṇa and Upanisadic literature. The names Aṅga and Magadha occur, however, in early Vedic literature.

Videha, corresponds mostly with the modern Tirhut division. The capital of Videha was Mithilā, usually identified with Janakapurī in the Nepal Tarai. In the course of time southern Videha developed a new kingdom with its capital at Vaiśālī, about twenty-three miles from Muzaffarpur.

It is in Paurānic literature that we find mention of Kārusha and Puṇḍra as states in South Bihar. The former was co-extensive with Shahabad district. About the identity of the latter, there is yet no unanimity; it may have included part of Hazaribagh district. So far as Palamau, Ranchi, Singhbhum and Manbhum districts are concerned, the territory they cover is not mentioned either in Vedic or Paurānic literature. Buddhist literature describes the Mahāvana (forest) to the north of Vaiśālī as stretching right up to the Himalayas in c. 500 B.C. There is, no doubt, some exaggeration in this statement, but it does show that a good deal of Videha was for a long time covered by forest. The Vaiśālī kingdom and republic of later days comprised about half of Videha.

The Kārusha country almost corresponded to the modern district

of Shahabad; Rama entered it after crossing the Gangā near Chapra in order to kill Tāṭikā the She-Demon. The western boundary of this kingdom was probably the river Karmanasa which today joins the Gangā near Buxar.

To the east of Kārusha lay Magadha; its capital at the time of the Mahābhārat war was Rājgṛiha, the modern Rajgir, about seventy miles south-east of Patna. Magadha was bounded on the north by the Gangā, on the west by the Son, while the hilly forests of the south formed the southern boundary. The eastern boundary is somewhat indefinite. Ancient Magadha covered the present districts of Patna and Gaya and a part perhaps of Hazaribagh district.

The kingdom of Aṅga lay to the east of Magadha; Champā on the outskirts of Bhagalpur was its ancient capital. It included Bhagalpur and Monghyr districts and some further contiguous territories. In the hey-day of its glory, its power probably extended right up to the confluence of the Sarayu and the Gangā at Chapra.

The sixteen Janapadas (regions) mentioned in Buddhist literature do not throw any additional light on the geography of Bihar. The Janapadas include a number of republican states such as the Śākyas, Koliyas, Bhaggas, Bulis, Mallas, Moriyas, and so on, but most of these were in eastern Uttar Pradesh. In Bihar the kingdom of Vaiśālī was replaced by a republic by *c.* 700 B.C. At about the same time the Videhan monarchy was replaced also by a republic. In South Bihar, political consolidation was taking place rapidly from *c.* 500 B.C. Aṅga was permanently annexed to Magadha at about that time and then came the turn of Kārusha. In *c.* 400 B.C. Magadha consisted of Monghyr, Bhagalpur, Gaya, Patna and Shahabad districts. Administrative divisions were yet to be developed; at any rate they did not exist in *c.* 500 B.C.

The rise of Magadha led to the shifting of its capital to Pāṭaliputra, which was more centrally situated than Rājgṛiha. The foundations of the new capital were being laid in the year of Buddha's death, *c.* 487 B.C. and the capital was shifted to it after the overthrow of the Lichchhavi republic in *c.* 475 B.C. As it commanded the river traffic of the Gangā, the Gandak, the Son, the Punpun and the Sarayu, it became a famous trade emporium. Buddha's prophecy about its immediate greatness referred perhaps to its future commercial, and not necessarily its political importance. The latter was to come far later.

Greek historians refer to the kingdom of the Nandas as that of

'Gandaridai' and 'Praisiai'. The first of these terms probably refers to the territory in the Gangā valley and the second to the kingdom of the east.

The territorial and administrative divisions of Bihar during the Mauryan rule are not very clearly known to us. But it may be presumed that some Commissioner's Divisions under Prādeśikas, and districts under Rajjukas existed; the latter must have been divided into Droṇamukhas and Kharvaṭakas. Neither the names nor the extent of the boundaries of any of these territorial divisions under the Mauryas are, however, in any way definite.

Very little is known of the historical geography of Bihar during the period 200 B.C. to A.D. 300. Bihar was divided into a number of small kingdoms but their names and boundaries are not known. The Śuṅgas held the province for about a hundred years, and were succeeded by the Kaṇvas. It is doubtful whether the entire region of modern Bihar was held by these dynasties for any length of time. The Kushāns ruled over Bihar from *c.* A.D. 70 to 150, probably through one or more Mahākshatrapas or Kshatrapas; their headquarters are, however, unknown to us.

During the third century A.D. the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī reasserted their position and established themselves as a strong power at Vaiśālī. The Guptas of Magadha were able to succeed in their imperial plans only by making a matrimonial alliance with the Lichchhavis.

We know a good deal about the Gupta administration, but very little about its territorial divisions in Bihar itself. Epigraphs refer to Magadhabhukti (land which is enjoyed) in the south and Tirabhukti in the north. Whether there was any other Bhukti, is not known. Magadhabhukti included the present districts Patna and Gaya, but whether it was still more extensive we do not know. Tirabhukti included the republic of Vaiśālī with its capital at that city. Probably it included the whole of northern Bihar. A Bhukti was divided into Viṣayas (part of territory), which corresponded rather with the modern subdivision than with the district. The spurious Gaya and Nālandā plates of Samudragupta do not mention any territorial divisions between the Viṣaya and the village.

An idea of the importance and busy life of the headquarters of a Bhukti in the Gupta empire can be gathered from the numerous seals found at Vaiśālī. It was very often a subsidiary capital, as was the case with Vaiśālī. It was of course the headquarters of an Uparika

or the governor of the Bhukti, while commanders of army divisions, quartermasters-general, and ecclesiastical officers often had their headquarters there. Very often too headquarters of big guilds of bankers, traders and transport workers were located there.

The historical geography of Bihar from *c.* A.D. 500 to 750 is mostly in the dark. It was during this period that Pāṭaliputra suffered terribly by a sudden and devastating flood of the Son, which till then joined the Gangā just near the city. A considerable part of the capital was cut off by the flood. The city had very few inhabitants at the time of the visit of Yuan Chwang in *c.* A.D. 637. Owing to its commercial importance, the city later regained some of its glory, but it may be doubted whether it ever became a capital of the Pāla empire. It is sometimes referred to as the camp (skandhāvāra) of the Pālas, but never as their capital.

Magadhabhukti changed its name to Śrīnagarabhukti in the Pāla period. It included the districts of Patna and Gaya. Aṅga may possibly have been included in the adjoining division of Puṇḍravardhana-Bhukti. We do not possess any detailed information about the geography of northern Bihar in this period. Probably it continued to be known as Tirabhukti as in the Gupta period, but its subdivisions or Viṣayas are not known.

One would very much like to draw a clear picture of the historical geography of Bihar of the period between 750 and 1200, but there is very little reliable and continuous data and no useful purpose would be served outlining a very fluid, changing and confused account, so far as the general reader is concerned. One may well wait for the accumulation of more data and in the meanwhile pass on to the next period where we are on firmer ground.

From 1200-1956

I. The Muslim Period. 1200-1765

Magadha, the central core of Bihar, consisted of the modern districts of Patna, Gaya, and Shahabad and parts of Monghyr and Bhagalpur. In the Moghal period, according to Buchanan, the Teliagarhi pass, where the Rajmahal hills almost touch the Ganges, 'formed the boundary between the Moghal provinces of Bihar and Bengal.'

Kekata formed the southern part of Magadha proper and eventually merged into it. It extended from 'Carnadra' to 'Gridhrakūta' (Vulture Peak) near Rajgir. Carnadra indicated either the Vishṇupad hills near Gaya, or Chunar. H. P. Shastri, in his *Political*

Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India, opines that it extended up to Chunar in the west. It included the modern district of Gaya and part of Shahabad.

Videha or Tirabhukti, which now forms the Tirhut division, was another well-marked natural division whose boundaries varied in different periods. An early 18th century work entitled *Sakti Śaṅgama Tantra,* which gives an account of some 66 countries (areas) considered holy by Shaivite pilgrims, has given the following brief account of this area: "From the bank of the Gandak to the forest of Champarania the country was called Videha or Tirabhukti." It was bounded on the east, west, and south by three big rivers, the Kosi, Gandak, and Ganges while the Tarai regions formed its northern boundary. The breadth, from north to south was 100 miles, while the length, from east to west was 250 miles, with a total area of 25,000 square miles. The area covered the modern districts of Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Champaran and parts of Bhagalpur, Monghyr and Purnea.

The hilly tracts in the south covering the districts of Ramgarh, Chotanagpur and Palamau have been rarely mentioned by Muslim historians. Abul Fazal called Chotanagpur by its old name of Kokrah, which is still the name of one of its perganas. The entire area from Birbhum and Panchet to Ratanpur in Central India and from Rohtas to the frontiers of Orissa, was collectively known as Jharkhand or jungle land. It is difficult to establish the exact relation of Chotanagpur to Bihar in the early period in the absence of survey records. The area was wild and jungle-clad, it had not been measured or assessed and did not form part of any 'sarkar' (revenue division) for revenue collection. There are, however, certain references showing that some areas in the region formed part of Bihar. Colonel Dalton, in his 'Notes on Chotanagpur Area', published in Hunter's *Statistical Accounts,* says that in the 14th century Malik Ibrahim Bayu, the Muqti (governor of Bihar) and the progenitor of the Maliks in the province, conquered Chai Champa which, according to *Āin-i-Ākbari,* was a pergana belonging to Bihar, and was assessed at 620,000 dams or Rs 15,000. It now forms a pergana in the Hazaribagh district. The estate of Panchet is definitely mentioned as part of Bihar, in the *Padshahnama,* the official history of Shah Jahan's reign.

The foundation of the Muslim power in the eastern provinces of Bihar and Bengal was laid by Bakhtīyār Khalji. When he reduced the 'Hisar-e-Bihar' or the fortress of Odantpuri Bihar and subjugated

the neighbouring areas, the entire area came to be known as Vihar or Bihar. The name, however, at that time applied strictly to the southern portion of modern Bihar. The Karṇāṭa dynasty of Simraon was at this time ruling in the north. The principality was hemmed in by four powerful states, Nepal in the north, Bengal in the east, the Pāla kingdom of South Bihar in the south, and Kanauj-Kasi in the west. According to the account of Mulla Taqia of the 16th century, Bakhtīyār Khalji invaded Tirhut and made its ruler a tributary before embarking on his raid on Nadia. It may be remarked that the whole of South Bihar and part of the north acknowledged the suzerainty of Bakhtīyār although there may have existed a few semi-independent petty chiefs. Dharmaswāmī of the 13th century was well received by Budh Sen of Vajrāsan or Gaya. Bengal, according to *Reyāẓ-us-Salātin*, was at this time divided into five regions: (1) Rādhā, the tract south of the Ganges and east of the Hugli; (2) Bagdi, the deltaic tract of the Ganges; (3) Banga, the tract to the east of, and beyond, the delta; (4) Barendra, the tract between the Karatoya and Mahanadi rivers; and (5) Mithilā, the tract to the west of the Mahanadi. According to the author of *Reyāẓ*, Bakhtīyār appears to have conquered Mithilā, Barendra, Rādhā, and the western portion of Bengal.

The actual boundaries of the different kingdoms of Bengal and Bihar were not mentioned in the contemporary works. There is, however, sufficient epigraphic and numismatic evidence which helps us to form some idea of the respective boundaries. We have epigraphic evidence to establish the comparatively uninterrupted hold of the Muslims over South Bihar (with its headquarters at Biharsharif). In the north, however, the Karṇāṭa rulers of Simraon managed to continue their hold. Time and again they were defeated but were never thoroughly subjugated. It is evident from the testimony of *Minhāj-us-Sirāj* that Iltutmish was bent upon separating Bihar from Bengal and making it a separate province, but there is no contemporary evidence as to the exact boundaries of the proposed new province. The inscription of Tughril Tughan dated 1242 clearly establishes that Bihar was once again separated from Delhi and amalgamated into Bengal, while the later Barahdari inscription dated 1265 shows that Muhammad Arsalan Khan (1259-63) and the succeeding governor Tartar Khan (1263-65) held independent sway over Bihar, with their capital at Biharsharif. Thus the province of Bihar at this time did not include Mithilā, which was a separate kingdom under the Karṇāṭa rulers.

There are several inscriptions for the period of the independent Balbani kings, which coincides with that of the Khalji period, to show that Bihar was for all practical purposes a part of Bengal.

Bihar figured prominently in the eastern campaigns of the Tughlaqs and demanded much of their attention. Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq, the founder of the dynasty, set out eastwards in 1324 through Bihar, and on his return conquered Tirhut and demolished the stronghold of the Karṇāṭa dynasty. Later, in about 1340, Mithilā was given over to Kāmeshwara Thākur, the founder of the O'niwara dynasty. Tirhut was formed into some sort of an administrative unit with Tughlaqpur (Darbhanga) as the seat of a Foujdar. South Bihar remained in undisputed possession of the Delhi Sultans even when Haji Ilyas was at the height of power and ruled over the whole of North Bihar. During this period, the Gandak formed the western frontier of Bengal in North Bihar.

Ilyas extended his dominions up to Tirhut, Champaran and even as far west as Gorakhpur. He was the founder of Hajipur on the banks of the Gandak, opposite Patna, which was the seat of the Bengal governors of North Bihar, and also of Shamsuddinpur (Samastipur). He divided Tirhut into two parts with the Gandak as the dividing line. Kāmeshwara Thākur, who tried to oppose the division, was forced to acquiesce in it. Firuz Tughlaq defeated Ilyas and drove him away from Tirhut. The two parts were united once again and given in vassalage to Bhogeshwara Thākur, the son of Kāmeshwara. The southern part of the district was directly ruled by Mughal governors. Southern Bihar was governed by Malik Bir Afghan, who in course of time probably extended his influence up to Tirhut. It was at this time that Malik Bayu, the Mukti (Governor) of Bihar, conquered the area of Chai Champā, in the modern Hazaribagh district. This shows that some portions at least of Chotanagpur formed part of the province of Bihar.

From 1397 to 1480 Bihar formed part of the Sharqi kingdom of Jaunpur. Khawaja Jahan, entitled Mālik-ush-Sharq, who was the virtual founder of the dynasty, extended his eastern frontiers into South Bihar and Tirhut.

The period witnessed the tripartite struggle for mastery over Bihar between the Lodis, Śarqis and the later Ilyas Śāhis. While South Bihar was for the most part under the undisputed possession of the Śarqis, part of Bhagalpur in North Bihar acknowledged the rule of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud (1442-59). According to Mulla Taqia,

Barbak Shah (1459-74), son and successor of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, regained possession over Tirhut (1470). He revived the previous arrangement of Ilyas Shah and split up North Bihar into two divisions, one of which was directly under Bengal while the other, north of the Gandak, was left in charge of Raja Dhir Singh. Muzaffar Shah, the last Abyssinian ruler of Bengal, exercised sway over parts of North Bihar, including Champanagar and Bhagalpur.

All attempts of Nusrat Shah to save Bihar were, however, foiled by the great victory of Babar at the battle of Ghagra. Babar's conquests extended from 'Bhira to Bihar'. A part of Tirhut was included in his empire. The revenue from Tirhut has been mentioned separately from that of Ziparan (Champaran).

The basis for the formation of Bihar as a separate Subah (province), appears to have been laid by Sher Shah. His acquisition of the kingdom of Bihar added some outlying areas such as Chunar, while his annexation of Monghyr from Mahmud Shah of Bengal extended the eastern boundaries to the Rajmahal Hills. The latter came to be regarded as the rightful boundary of Bihar in Moghal times. Bihar, had so long been usually divided into Northern and Southern regions, which were frequently held under two different and hostile powers. Now the two were united and brought under a common and centralized political and administrative control. It has, however, to be remembered that the 'Subah' as an administrative unit had not yet come into vogue. It became prominent from Akbar's time.

Akbar constituted Bihar into one of the 'Subahs' of his Empire (1575). The new Subah was divided into the seven Sarkars of Bihar, Monghyr, Rohtas, Tirhut, Hajipur, Saran and Champaran. These were subdivided into 199 perganas. Abul Fazal has described the area of the Subah as stretching east to west from Garhi to Rohtas, 120 kos (300 miles) long, and north to south from Tirhut to the southern hill ranges, 110 kos (275 miles) broad. It was bounded on the east and west by the neighbouring Subahs of Bengal and Allahabad, and on the north and south by mountain ranges—the Himalayas and Vindhyas. The earliest and the most trustworthy contemporary source of information on the subject is the rent-roll prepared by Raja Todar Mall during the years 1582-89. Blochmann, on the basis of original records, outlined the eastern frontier in the following words:—'From Garhi the frontier passed along with the Ganges to the south of Agmahall (Rajmahal), where it again turned westward to north-western Birbhum passing along the boundary of the modern

Santhal Parganas to the confluence of the Barakar and the Damodar from where it went along the left bank of the Damodar to the neighbourhood of the town of Burdwan. From here again the frontier took a westerly turn and passed along the north-western and western boundaries of the modern Hugli and Hubrah (Howrah) districts down to Mandalghat where the Rupnarain flows into the Hugli river.' On the north, the frontier was ill-defined and subject to frequent inroads and disturbances from the Tarai areas. The vast forest belt, stretching along the greater part of the northern boundary and known as the Tarai or jungleterry area, varied considerably in depth. At the eastern end of this Tarai area, there was the independent kingdom of Morang, which was conquered during the period of Buzurg Ummed Khan's governorship (1683-94). The southern boundary along the Chotanagpur plateau was even more irregular and ill-defined. The area, owing to its wild and inaccessible terrain, was an uncharted and unassessed region. It lay along the borders of the two provinces of Bihar and Bengal and frequently overlapped their respective boundaries.

Kokrah, as this area was then called, was famous for its diamond mines, and was probably invaded on that account. The *Āin-i-Ākbari* contains the following extract about it: 'Kokrah is a well-cultivated district between Orissa and Dakhin. It is ruled by Raja Madho Singh. As the country is inaccessible he thought he was safe and assumed an independent attitude. Our men, however, entered the district and carried off much booty. The Raja became tributary.' The area is also mentioned in the *Memoirs* of Jahangir, who specifically described it as part of Bihar. 'It was reported to me (1616) that Ibrahim Khan, the governor of Bihar, had overrun Kokrah and had taken possession of its diamond washing. The district belongs to the Subah Bihar...'

The only other event of importance relating to the boundaries of the province, during the succeeding reigns of Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb was the subjugation and final conquest of Palamau, the western portion of the Chotanagpur plateau. Palamau acquired a greater importance because of the activities of the Cherus. During Aurangzeb's time, Daud Khan, the governor, led several expeditions and finally reduced the fortress of Palamau (1660). The boundary of Bihar was thus more securely and firmly extended over Chotanagpur. Conversely, it has to be remembered that certain areas which now definitely form a part of Bihar were included in the Subah of Bengal.

The entire Sarkar 'Purniya' was included in Bengal. The area forming the present district was, according to *the Āin-i-Ākbari*, divided between the three neighbouring Sarkars—of Tajpur, to the east of the Mahanadi, Purnea to the west of it, and Monghyr. Similarly Rajmahal, now in Bihar, was the seat of residence of Man Singh, the Moghal governor of the province of Bengal.

ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

The Turco-Afghan period was essentially a period of expansion and consolidation. The Central administration was primarily concerned with the collection of revenue and the maintenance of a strong and efficient army to guard its frontiers. The interior and the outlying parts of the empire were left more or less undisturbed. The whole country was divided into some kind of broad military commands, each under the control of a leading Amar. These divisions, known as Iqtas, were the major administrative units of the country and may be regarded as the precursors of the 'Subah'.

Besides the Iqtas there was another unit called the Khālsā. These were revenue areas governed not by regular provincial governors but by a specially appointed Amar or Shahna. The age-old institution of village Panchāyats was allowed to continue uninterrupted for they admirably served the purpose of the rulers.

Sher Shah made certain very important and far-reaching contributions to the administrative history of Medieval Bihar. In fact his reforms paved the way for the later and more comprehensive reforms under Akbar. He developed the Pergana as the basic administrative unit of his Empire. Each Pergana was administered by a civil and a military officer called a Shiqdar and an Amin respectively. The next higher unit was the Sarkar, a territorial division somewhere between the modern district and division.

The administrative ideas and institutions which the Moghals brought with them to India were, in the beginning, felt to be contrary and unsuited to local conditions. However, in course of time and by a process of mutual fusion and interaction, they took a new shape and crystallized into new institutions. We are fortunate in having the monumental work of Abul Fazal, which is a compendium of the historical, administrative, and geographical data of Akbar's empire. Its added importance lies in the fact that it is the bed-rock upon which the later administrative structure of the Moghal Empire was raised. The arrangements outlined and the machinery described

in it held good for the greater part of the subsequent Moghal period. Each of the sixteen Subahs of the Empire, along with their smaller subdivisions have been described with 'minute exactitude'. A brief description of the constituent Sarkars and Perganas of Bihar is given below:—

1. *Sarkar of Bihar.* This consisted of 46 Mahals or Perganas, with a total area of 9,52,593 bighas and yielded a revenue of 8,01,96,390 dams. Each Pergana, along with its revenue and in most cases its area, has been named in the list. This Sarkar corresponded to the modern districts of Patna and Gaya and also included certain portions of Chotanagpur and Palamau, as the Perganas Pundag and Jay Champā given in the lists have been identified by Beams as the modern Palamau and Chai Champā (Hazaribagh).

2. *Sarkar of Monghyr.* This consisted of 31 Mahals with a revenue of 19,06,25,981½ dams. It is significant that the area is not given. This usually indicated a loose suzerainty over the area and a lack of actual control.

3. *Sarkar of Champaran.* This had an area of 85,711 bighas and a revenue of 55,13,420 dams. The three Perganas of Simraon, Mehsi and Majhowa are still extant. This Sarkar bordered on that of Gorakhpur in Awadh and marked the north-western boundary of Bihar.

4. *Sarkar of Hājipur.* This included 11 Mahals, covering 4,36,952 bighas and had a revenue of 2,73,31,030 dams. It lay along the tract between the Burhi Gandak on the north-east and the Gandak and Ganges on the south-west and south respectively. North of the Gandak lay the Sarkar of Tirhut.

5. *Sarkar of Tirhut.* This consisted of 74 Mahals and had an area of 2,66,464 bighas and a revenue of 1,91,89,777½ dams. The large number of Perganas in this Sarkar was due to their comparatively smaller dimension. The greater part of the area was under the rule of the Darbhanga Raj.

6. *Sarkar of Saran.* This included 17 Mahals, and had an area of 2,29,052 bighas and a revenue of 6,01,72,004½ dams. Many of the Perganas named in the list are still in existence.

7. *Sarkar of Rohtas.* This had 18 Mahals, an area of 4,73,340 bighas and a revenue of 4,08,19,493 dams. It marked the south-western boundary of the province and corresponded to the modern Shahabad district. It was bounded by the Ganges, Son and Karamanasa rivers on the north, east and west, and by the Kaimur range on the south. The only other important change in these administrative units in

subsequent times was the division of Rohtas into two by Aurangzeb in A.D. 1685. The eighteen Mahals of the original Sarkar were divided between the two new units. Rohtas contained seven, and the newly created Sarkar of Bhojpur contained eleven.

II. The British Period. 1765-1947

By virtue of the Grant of Dewani of the three eastern provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, as also the various supplementary agreements, the British took over the full administrative charge of these provinces. It has, however, to be noted that separate Farmans of grant were issued for the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, emphasizing their separate administrative entities.

The immediate arrangement for Bihar following the Grant, was the appointment (20 December 1765) of Samuel Middleton, the Chief of Patna, as the Supervisor of collection of revenue in Bihar. This, however, was soon found to be impracticable as the Chief could not exercise effective control over his unwieldy jurisdiction. The Governor Verelst (1767-69) is credited with the initiation and enforcement of the scheme of appointing supervisors.

The next important stage was the declaration by the Court of Directors, in 1772, to 'stand forth as the Dewan and by the Agency of the Company's servants to take upon themselves the entire care and management of the revenues.'

FORMATION OF DISTRICTS

After the creation of the office of Revenue Chief of Bihar in 1781, this official administered a very large and extensive tract of land comprising practically the whole of the present Patna and Tirhut divisions. The main development of administrative importance during the next few years was the gradual breaking up of the extensive jurisdiction of the Revenue Chief and the formation of separate Collectorates or districts.

Another important administrative development was the origin and growth of the Commissioner of Revenue and Circuit.

BIHAR A SEPARATE STATE

Before taking up the question of the Bihar State in independent India, it is necessary to refer to two important landmarks, namely, in 1912 Bihar and Orissa were separated from Bengal and again in 1937 Orissa was separated from Bihar.

We have already seen that it was Sher Shah who laid the foundation of a Bihar Subah (province). Even when the Dewani was granted to the British in 1765 three separate Farmans were issued, showing that Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were even then treated as separate units.

Some decades after the British became full masters of India, they began to think in terms of the principles on which major administrative divisions such as provinces should be based. The Royal Commission on Decentralization (1908), in its report (p. 25) observed: 'The various provinces contain diverse nationalities with different languages, traditions, and interests, and are often on separate planes of development.' The Hardinge Despatch of 1911, while cancelling the partition of Bengal which had been sponsored in 1905, stated: 'It is in the highest degree desirable to give the Hindi-speaking people (Biharis), now included within the province of Bengal, a separate administration. These people have hitherto been unequally yoked with the Bengalis, and have never, therefore, had fair opportunity for development.' The Hardinge Despatch also stated: 'The cry of Bihar for Biharis has frequently been raised. . . There has, moreover, been marked awakening in Bihar in recent years, and a strong feeling is growing among Biharis that Bihar will never develop until it is dissociated from Bengal. That belief will, unless a remedy be found, give rise to agitation in the near future, and the present is an admirable opportunity to carry out on our own initiative a thoroughly sound and much-deserved change.'

The result was the separation of Bihar and Orissa from Bengal in 1912. These two units continued as one province till 1937, when, there was another major change and Orissa was formed into a separate province. Since then the present Bihar State began to function as a province by itself and continued to do so at the time of the coming of independence.

III. Independent India. 1947-1956

The transfer of power on 15 August 1947 did not entail any break in the administrative system or any upsetting of the then existing provincial boundaries. One of the important developments that followed independence was the integration of the Indian States. The English had divided the country into so-called British India and the 'Native States'. The division was purely artificial and the result of history. With the achievement of independence, a determined

effort was made for the integration of the States either into bigger administrative and economic units or with the neighbouring provinces. Bihar was also affected, although in a comparatively minor way, by this scheme of integration. The States of Seraikela and Kharsawan, lying geographically within the Singhbhum District, were integrated with Bihar. The States were formerly included in the Eastern Indian States Agency and lay along the borders of Bihar and Orissa. At first the States were merged for a short while with Orissa, but eventually the Central Government decided to amalgamate them with Bihar.

REORGANIZATION OF STATES

The other major development was the reorganization of States. A greater part of the existing provincial boundaries were drawn by the English on a purely administrative basis without any attempt at ethnic or linguistic homogeneity. A States Re-organization Commission was constituted towards the end of 1953 by virtue of a resolution of Parliament. The Commission was entrusted with the task of enquiring into, and reporting upon, the existing States and their reorganization along linguistic, financial, economic and other considerations.

So far as Bihar was concerned, a very large area of land along its eastern and southern boundary was claimed by Bengal. The area, affected by the claim comprised practically the entire district of Manbhum and parts of Purnea, Santhal Parganas and Singhbhum. Bihar also laid claim to certain areas in Bengal in the Maldah andDarjeeling regions. The Commission partially conceded the demand of Bengal. Ultimately a large part of Manbhum district as well as a portion of the Purnea district lying to the west of the Mahananda river (but excluding the town of Kishanganj and certain other small areas) were recommended to be transferred to Bengal. Except for this change, the territory and boundaries of Bihar remain as they were constituted in 1912, when with Orissa it was first separated from Bengal, and in 1937 when Orissa was separated from Bihar.

The total area transferred on 1 November 1956 from Bihar to West Bengal was 3,166 sq. miles (759 sq. miles of Purnea district and 2,407 sq. miles of Manbhum district) with a population of 14,46,385 consisting of the following thanas (Police Stations) in the districts of Manbhum and Purnea:—

MANBHUM DISTRICT

1. Jhalda
2. Jaipur
3. Purulia Town
4. Purulia Muffassil
5. Balarampur
6. Hura
7. Arsa
8. Puncha
9. Baghmundi
10. Barabazar
11. Bandwan
12. Manbazar
13. Raghunathpur
14. Santuri
15. Neturta
16. Kashipur
17. Para

PURNEA DISTRICT

Parts of :—

1. Kishanganj
2. Chopra
3. Islampur
4. Karandighi
5. Thakurganj, and
6. Whole of Goalpokhar P.S. lying to the east of National Highway 31 and North of Highway 344.

The demarcation of the boundary line has been done by a Revenue Officer appointed by the Central Government on the following basis:—

(*i*) that portion of Kishanganj sub-division of Purnea district which lies to the east of the boundary line so demarcated as to be generally 200 yds. to the west of the highway in Purnea district connecting Dalkola, Kishanganj and Chopra with Siliguri in Darjeeling district and 200 yds. to the south or south-west of the highway in Purnea district connecting Dalkola and Karandighi with Raiganj in West Dinajpur district;

(*ii*) that portion of Gopalpur thana of Purnea district which lies to the east or north as the case may be, of the above boundary line; and

(*iii*) Purulia subdivision of Manbhum district, excluding Chas thana, Chandil thana and Patanda police station of Barabhum thana.

III

RACES, TRIBES AND LANGUAGES OF BIHAR

Introductory

AFTER having dealt with the geology and geography of Bihar in a general way, we now come to the people that have made this region their home. We shall try to study a few aspects, ethnological and other, that characterize these people who have often played a significant role in India, especially in ancient times.

This chapter proposes to present observations on the races and tribes that inhabit this land and to give some information about the languages of its people.

Though biologically all the human beings of this world are the same, whatever their colour and location, it has long been customary to speak of the races of mankind on the basis of their skeletal structure, appearance and pigmentation. This has been found a convenient way of classifying human beings, but it has been proved that, scientifically speaking, race or racial characteristics, are no criteria when it comes to judging the superiority or inferiority, progress or backwardness, of a group of people. The UNESCO has made a special investigation into this matter with the aid of the world's best-known scientists and the conclusion reached has been that racial superiority and inferiority are myths and that the economic or cultural advancement of particular races has been due more to circumstances, environment and other such factors, than to any inherited racial characteristics.

It is all the more necessary to bear this weighty conclusion in mind at present since we see race conflicts of one kind or another raging in different parts of the world. They are based on the assumption that certain races are superior to others. Whatever may have

been the origin of Varṇa in India, the present hierarchical caste system is in many respects akin to racialism. Caste depends on birth, so does race. Ideas about being higher or lower go with birth in particular castes. In that respect too, caste resembles racial conceptions with regard to purity of blood, marriage restrictions and so on. It is high time that a scientific and rational view should be taken in regard to these matters, since economic, cultural and other forms of advancement depend on other factors than those of birth, caste, race, blood or pigmentation.

A tribe is usually described as a group of people characterized by a common and distinct name, a common sentiment, and a common and distinct territory. It is also endogamous and has a common machinery for maintaining order in the community. In the present context, however, the term connotes groups of people who are comparatively far too ill-developed and backward in economic and cultural advance. It may be noted in this connexion that a 'tribe' is not bound to be in a backward condition for all time to come. Its handicaps lie not so much in any hereditary defect or fundamental biological deficiencies as in environment. Adverse conditions, want of opportunities and so on, keep particular tribes in that stage. In fact, if we probe into the past of those who are said to be advanced and civilized today, we find that they too were once but 'tribes'. Thus, 'tribal' is a changing condition and not a permanent fixture. Dynamic forces are constantly at work among all peoples. In these days, when the civilized world is becoming more and more humanity-conscious, it is only a question of time and resources even for the most backward tribes to attain certain standards of civilization whereby they can cross the line that divides tribals from non-tribals. It is in this perspective that we have to consider the problems of race and tribe.

As regards languages, India has a number of them, though languages that have a script and a considerable literature may not be more than about the fourteen that are enumerated in the Union Constitution. In this connexion too, languages which were once poor in expression have caught up and today can boast of very rich literatures. It is a question of opportunity and the progress of the people concerned. The more vigorous and complex the life of a people, the more likelihood is there of the development of their language and literature. The terms 'backward' and 'advanced' are therefore relative, and do not stand for any permanent state which is incapable of further

improvement and advance. In Bihar, for instance, Hindi may be said to be more advanced than Maithili or Bhojpuri, but when compared to English or French, it can be said that it is in many respects backward. It is in the interests of mankind as a whole to develop a healthy, fraternal outlook, which will promote all languages to the extent that is necessary and possible.

The Races of Bihar

Scientists are generally agreed that all men living today belong to a single species, *Homo sapiens*, and are derived from a common stock, though there is some dispute as to when and how different human groups have diverged from this common stock. The concept of race is unanimously regarded by anthropologists as a classificatory device providing a zoological framework within which the various groups of mankind may be arranged and by means of which the study of evolutionary processes can be facilitated. In its anthropological sense the word race should be reserved for groups of mankind possessing well-developed and primarily heritable physical differences from other groups.

Some of the physical, as distinct from psychological differences between human groups are due to differences in hereditary constitution, others to differences in environment. In most cases, both influences have been at work. The science of genetics suggests that hereditary physical differences among populations of a single species are the result of the action of two sets of processes. On the one hand, the genetic composition of isolated populations is constantly but gradually being altered by natural selection, as well as by occasional changes (mutations) in the physical particles (genes) which control heredity. Populations are also affected by fortuitous changes in gene frequency and by marriage customs. On the other hand, cross-breeding is constantly breaking down the differentiations so set up. The new mixed populations, in so far as they, in turn, become isolated, are subject to the same processes and they may lead to further changes. The existing races are merely the result, considered at a particular moment in time, of the total effect of such processes on the human species.

National, religious, geographical, linguistic and cultural groups, do not necessarily coincide with racial groups and their cultural traits have no domonstrable connexion with racial traits. Americans are not a race, nor are the French or Germans, nor, *ipso facto*, is any

other national group. Muslims and Jews are no more races than are Roman Catholics or Protestants. Nor can people who live in Iceland, Britain or India, or who speak English or any other language, or who are culturally Turkish or Chinese or the like, thereby be described as races. The use of the term 'race' in speaking of such groups may be a serious error, but it is one which is habitually committed.

Broadly speaking, individuals belonging to the different major groups of mankind are distinguishable by virtue of their physical characteristics, but individual members, or small groups, belonging to different races within the same major group, are not so distinguishable. Even the major groups fade into each other and the physical traits by which they and the races within them are characterized, overlap considerably. With respect to most, if not all, measurable characteristics, differences among individuals belonging to the same race are greater than the differences which occur between observed averages for two or more races within the same major group.

The conclusion to be drawn alike from the anthropological and psychological researches is that the racial factor is very far from being the dominant element in the formation of personality. This should give no cause for astonishment when we remember that psychological traits cannot be transmitted directly as a part of heredity; for instance, there is no gene governing mind-wandering or the power of concentration.

The scientific material available to us at present does not justify the conclusion that inherited genetic differences are a major factor in producing the differences between the cultural achievements of different peoples and groups. It does indicate, on the contrary, that a major factor in explaining such differences is the cultural experience which each group has undergone.

There is no evidence for the existence of so-called 'pure' races. Skeletal remains provide the basis of our limited knowledge about earlier races, and in regard to race mixture, the evidence points to the fact that human hybridization has been going on for an indefinite but considerable time. Indeed one of the processes of race formation and race extinction or absorption, is by means of hybridization between races: nor is there any reliable evidence that this produces undesirable or disadvantageous effects. Therefore, genetically-speaking, intermarriage between persons of different races need not be looked upon with disfavour. Vast social changes have occurred that have not been connected in any way with changes in racial type

and in no country has it been possible to find a so-called 'pure' race. From time to time the Indian sub-continent has received various strains of blood. Of the autochthonous population of India, i.e. the Negrito, only faint traces can be found in some of the primitive tribes of South India. The next strain was the Proto-Australoid, which is widely distributed in the tribal population in the belt running across the middle of India. Then came the Mediterraneans and Mongoloids, the broad-headed Alpinoids, Dinarics and Armenoids and, last of all, the Nordics. All these strains are mixed in the whole population of India and can everywhere be traced in varying degrees.

RACIAL COMPOSITION IN BIHAR

While a study of the racial elements in India has been made by different scholars such as Risley, Eickstedt, Hutton, Guha, Sarkar, Majumdar and Chatterjee, no investigation into the racial elements in Bihar has yet been made. The people of India have been classified into the Negrito, Proto-Australoid, Mongoloid, Mediterranean, the Western Brachycephal and the Nordic by Guha, but Dr B. K. Chatterjee prefers to divide the people of India into Niṣāda, Kirāta, Drāviḍa and Ārya. Representatives of all these elements are to be found in the population of Bihar.

According to Dr Guha, the earliest race which inhabited India was that of the Negritoes. Very few true representatives of this race are to be found in India now. Dr S. S. Sarkar chanced to meet a young man among the aborigines of the Rajmahal hills who had certain Negrito features, such as woolly hair. 'The presence of the Negrito basic substratum,' says Dr B. K. Chatterjee, 'cannot be fully justified when the nature of the evidence is thoroughly analysed. The presence of such characteristics simply points to either admixture or mutation.' Dr D. N. Majumdar holds similar views.

The next racial strain is the Proto-Australoid. The shape of the head, the form of the nose, the projection of the face, the skin-colour and the structure of the hair, bear a striking resemblance to the Australoid features. In Bihar we find these features in the Kharwar, Munda, Bhumij and Mal Paharias. We have no definite evidence as to the time of the respective drift of this race into India. These features are fairly widespread and in the process of this expansion the Proto-Australoid unquestionably absorbed a large amount of blood from other racial stocks. That accounts for some of the differences noticeable in these tribes.

The racial history of the Austric people has not yet been rescued from traditional antiquity. They have been variously described as Pre-Dravidian, Kolarian, Dravidian, Australoid and Nishadic. Their racial affinity with the tribal groups of South India has very often been misunderstood. We are still uncertain as to the racial composition of various Austric-speaking groups in Bihar, such as Munda, Santhal, Ho, Birhor, Kharia and others. The Oraons, or Dravidian-speaking people living in the same area and possessing a slightly different culture from their neighbours, have further complicated the issue. Dr A. C. Haddon held that from the racial point of view the Kolarians can only be classed in the Pre-Dravidian group. The Oraons were also placed by him in that group. But he admits that there is a considerable difference noticeable between the Munda and the Oraon. Shri P. C. Basu showed the difference between them in two successive studies based on measurements. Studies made by Dr S. S. Sarkar of the Santhal and Sauria Paharias in the Santhal Parganas are highly significant from the point of view of the differences between the Austric-speaking and Dravidian-speaking people. His findings were further corroborated by a blood-group survey of the same tribes. The Mundas also have peculiar hybrid combinations. Risley noted no less than nine. These hybrids are descended from intermarriage between Munda men and women of other tribes. Macfarlane and Sarkar (1941) pointed out that the high frequencies of the two genes 'p' and 'q' are characteristic of the Munda peoples. This is indicative of their relationship with peoples of the East Indian archipelago. According to Dr Sarkar, the not infrequent presence of straight hair among the Santhals and Mundas is also indicative of a foreign element in the population.

Dr D. N. Majumdar holds that the racial status to-day of all the Proto-Australoids cannot have remained the same as millions of that race mixed with other strains which has diluted the 'purity of blood' among themselves. The Bhils, who spread all over Central India, Rajputana and Gujrat, are sometimes identified with the Ho, Munda and other cognate tribes speaking Austric languages. E. W. E. Macfarlane quotes anthropometric data to suggest a racial affiliation of the Bhils with the Oraons. But the secrological data she obtained showed differences which she admitted were difficult to explain.

In Bihar some admixture of Mongoloid blood may be found among the Tharus of the Champaran district who show many Mongoloid facial characteristics.

People living in a region are broadly classified as tribal and non-tribal, though it is not a scientific division. The Union Constitution also speaks of Scheduled Tribes. If one applies the same terminology to the population of Bihar, about one-tenth is tribal and the rest non-tribal.

Before proceeding to consider the tribes of Bihar, it may be interesting to note a few things about its non-tribals.

RACIAL COMPOSITION OF THE NON-TRIBAL POPULATION IN BIHAR

The non-tribal population of Bihar is generally long-headed with a fine to medium nose, average stature, wavy hair form, and skin-colour varying from light brown to dark tawny. This group of people, Risley calls 'Aryo-Dravidian' and he adds that in the so-called upper castes the Aryan type is dominant, while in the lower castes the Dravidian type is more pronounced. But Risley's view has been rejected by all the modern Indian anthropologists, on the ground that both 'Aryan' and 'Dravidian' are linguistic terms and hence cannot be used to designate races.

According to Dr B. S. Guha, the lower castes of Bihar represent the 'basic-dolico type' (long-headed), having dark complexions, pointed chins, and possessing certain Negroid characters such as deep pigmentation. Guha speaks of them as belonging to the 'Palaeo-Mediterranean' racial group, but Baron von Eickstedt prefers to call them the 'Melanid type', because in some physical characters they resemble the Melanesian type of Negroids. At present, neither Dr Guha nor anyone else accepts this view of Eickstedt. The upper castes of Bihar come within the 'Mediterranean' racial group of Guha, because of its association with the European Mediterranean. This type predominates among the skeletons of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa. Guha thinks that this type was responsible for the Indus Valley Civilization.

According to Hutton as many as three different waves of the Mediterranean race came to India at three different times. Guha's and Hutton's views are almost identical in the sense that Hutton's early branch of the Mediterranean race is Guha's 'Palaeo-Mediterranean', while Hutton's second wave of the Mediterranean race, which came through the Persian Gulf, is Guha's 'Mediterranean race'.

To the non-tribal group of Western Bihar, who are of moderately full stature and have fine to medium noses, Dr D. N. Majumdar gives the racial-group name of 'Indo-Nordic'.

The Brāhmaṇs and the Kshatriyas belong to the same racial stock, but the latter are more mixed than the former. The original Kshatriyas lost their purity of blood by intermarriage with later Rajputs. The various artisan castes such as the Koiri, Kurmi, Kāhār and Āhir, do not differ very much from each other in physical characteristics, yet they represent a mixture of various racial strains. The Doms and Chāmārs are racially even farther removed from tribal groups. Leaving aside the large hybrid elements among them, the average Dom is, by modern standards, a handsomer person than the Chāmār. The incidence of handsome and attractive features among Dom women is a cause rather than the consequence of miscogenations. The so-called higher castes have a greater admixture of Mediterranean and Nordic features than the others.

THE TRIBES OF BIHAR

According to the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, there are twenty-nine Scheduled Tribes in Bihar, but population figures for only twenty-five of them were given in the 1941 Census, on which the Table on p. 74 is mainly based. Of the remaining four tribes, figures of three have been taken from the 1951 Census, as indicated in our Table; while in the case of the fourth, the Khonds, it will be seen that no useful figures are available from either the 1951 or the 1941 Census of Bihar. When the 1931 Census was taken Bihar and Orissa together formed one province and figures were given only for those Khonds concentrated in the feudatory States of Orissa and not within the territorial limits of the present State of Bihar.

Bearing these numerical adjustments in mind, the total population of the twenty-nine Scheduled Tribes of Bihar was 3,865,725 in 1941. By 1951, when the last Census enumeration was made, this total had risen to 4,049,183, an increase in the order of 5%.

It is obvious that the Census figures of 1951 could not be used for the Table below as breakdown of figures was not available at the time of preparing it.

POPULATION OF THE TWENTY-NINE SCHEDULED TRIBES OF BIHAR
(CENSUS OF 1941)

NAME OF SCHEDULED TRIBE		POPULATION
1. Asur	..	4,388
2. Baiga	..	54
3. Bathudi	..	998 (1931)
4. Bedia	..	31,813
5. Binjhia	..	5,317
6. Birhor	..	2,507
7. Birjia	..	2,075
8. Chero	..	19,337
9. Chik Baraik	..	29,739 (1931)
10. Gond	..	27,445
11. Gorait	..	9,331
12. Ho	..	383,737
13. Karmali	..	10,902
14. Kharia	..	89,038
15. Kharwar	..	77,702
16. Khond	..	Not Available
17. Kisan	..	15,097
18. Kora	..	15,875
19. Korwa	..	13,021 (1931)
20. Lohara	..	47,144
21. Mahli	..	61,893
22. Mal Paharia	..	40,496
23. Munda	..	530,676
24. Oraon	..	640,485
25. Parahiya	..	10,134
26. Santhal	..	1,569,069
27. Sauria Paharia	..	58,654
28. Savar	..	2,754
29. Bhumij	..	166,044
TOTAL	..	3,865,725

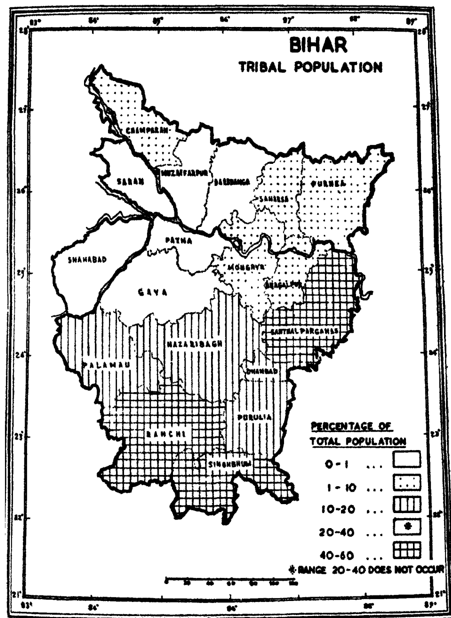
All these tribes belong to the Proto-Australoid stock, though there are slight differences among them.

Most of the Scheduled Tribes live in the five districts of the Chota-nagpur Division, namely Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Manbhum, Singhbhum and Palamau and in the district of Santhal Parganas. They are found in various other pockets, such as the hilly tracts of the subdivisions of Sasaram and Bhabua in the district of Shahabad, and in the districts of Bhagalpur, Monghyr, Purnea and Champaran. It is obvious that all the tribes cannot be dealt with here. Only some of the more important and typical tribes have been described below.

THE MUNDAS

In the census of 1941, the Mundas numbered 530,676. Of these,

Map 1



BIHAR
TRIBAL POPULATION
CHAMPARAN
MUZAFFARPUR
DARBHANGA
SARAN
SAHARSA
PURNEA
PATNA
SHAHABAD
MONGHYR
BHAGALPUR
GAYA
SANTHAL PARGANAS
HAZARIBAGH
PALAMAU
DHANBAD
PURULIA
RANCHI
SINGHBHUM
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION
0-1 ...
1-10 ...
10-20 ...
20-40 ... *
40-60 ...
* RANGE 20-40 DOES NOT OCCUR

more than four hundred thousand lived in the district of Ranchi. The Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Manbhum and Palamau districts had between them one hundred thousand Mundas, while a few thousands were to be found in Shahabad and Purnea. In the districts of Bhagalpur, the Santhal Parganas and Gaya, the Mundas numbered only a few hundreds.

The Munda is of so dark a brown as to be almost black, is short in stature, but sturdy-limbed and has irregular features, scanty beard, thick lips, broad nose and a low facial angle while his head is more brachycephalic than that of the average Oraon. His is considered to be one of the most ancient of the aboriginal tribes inhabiting the Chotanagpur plateau and their origin and migration have long been subjects of controversy among scholars. S. C. Roy has given a rough outline of how they came to settle in the present region, based on references found in Vedic, Epic, and later Hindu literature, as well as on their own tradition. In the absence of reliable historical sources however, the reconstruction of Munda history is little more than a series of conjectures. A proud and conservative tribe, they live in large permanent villages and their most important occupation is agriculture.

The Mundas believe in a Supreme Being called Sing-Bongā, whose blessings are invoked before every important ceremony. Sing-Bongā has no specific worship, but in serious general calamities a white fowl is sacrificed to him. The village deities, such as Desauli-Bongā, Jaher Buri, Chandi-Bongā and others, are the Hatu-Bongāko. These aid the Mundas in their agricultural operations and hunting expeditions as well as in most other affairs of life. They are worshipped by the Pahan (priest) at stated times in the 'Sarna' (place of worship) of each village. The Ora-Bongāko, or household deities, are worshipped at the 'Ading' or sacred tabernacle, in each hut. Then there are the Manita-Bongā, who are not deities, but malevolent spirits known as Churin, Mua, Hankar-Bongā, Nasan-Bongā and so on, who require to be appeased. They are appeased by 'mati' or 'deonara' or ghost doctors. Elemental nature-gods like Buru-Bongā, Ikir-Bongā, and Nage Era stand midway between the benevolent and the malevolent spirits, being powerful for good and evil alike. They are worshipped by the Pahan. Achrael-Bongā presides over the welfare of married women.

The Akhra, or the dancing-ground of the Mundas is characteristic of them. Situated usually under the shade of a big tree in the

centre of the village, it is encircled by large stone slabs which are used as seats. The Akhra is a veritable open hall, not only for the dance, but for the meetings of the village panchayats. The Parha (panchayat) organization of the Mundas is more active than that of the Oraons.

THE HOS

Of the 349,645 Hos recorded in the Bihar census of 1941, all but a few hundreds lived in the district of Singhbhum, while the majority were concentrated in the government estate of Kolhan. The Hos are short of stature, dark complexioned and have a short, broad and flat nose. The eyes are small and dark, and the hair wavy to curly. Beards are almost entirely absent, the chin is narrow, the lips of medium size while the ears are small and finely developed. Agriculture is their mainstay, but they work in large numbers in the coal-mines and steel factories which abound in these areas. They are highly responsive to cultural contacts.

Like the Munda, the Hos believe in Sing-Bongā as the Supreme Being and Creator of the Universe while all other deities are conceived to be his deputies. The two village deities of the Ho are Desauli and his consort Jahira Buru. Desauli appears to be a forest deity, but the size, shape and form of the deity is dependent on the interpretations of the village priest and these vary in different parts of the Ho country. Desauli has a fixed abode in the village grove, is a benevolent deity protecting the villagers from evil spirits, diseases and epidemics, and sending rain and abundant harvests. At the time of festivals sacrifices are offered to him and his consort. Through contact with Hindu populations the Hos have adopted certain Hindu godlings, but these are worshipped with a ritual and ceremony adapted to Ho custom and tradition.

An incipient class system seems to be developing among the Hos. Outcastes, called Kajomesin even after purification, are not accorded full equality with the rest of the community and have formed a separate endogamous caste. People belonging to the family of headmen do not marry lower into the family of other Hos who are called 'parjā' (subjects). Increasing contact with industrial centres in Singhbhum and the influx of money in the form of wages, have resulted in the demand for excessive bride-prices. This factor has become more important in the arrangement of Ho marriages than among the other tribes of Chotanagpur.

THE SANTHALS

The Santhals are the largest of the tribes of Eastern India. In 1941, they numbered 1,569,069. Of these nearly 800,000 were concentrated in the district known after them as Santhal Parganas. The adjoining district of Manbhum is inhabited by over 300,000 Santhals while the districts of Hazaribagh and Singhbhum account for another 250,000. In the districts of Monghyr, Bhagalpur and Purnea, Santhals number 150,000.

The Santhals are short in stature, and possess a broad flat nose with a sunken nose-ridge. They have wavy hair; sometimes it is curly, though never frizzy. Dr Guha places them in the Proto-Australoid group. The Santhals were the last of the tribes to settle in this part of Bihar. Historical records relate that even at the close of the eighteenth century and during the first half of the nineteenth they were still arriving in the district, from which they ousted the Paharias and drove them to the hills They reclaimed vast tracts of cultivable land from the forests; built and occupied new villages and constructed a network of irrigated fields in which they raised rice, millet, pulses and vegetables.

The Supreme Being is known by the Santhals as Thākur. He is sometimes distinguished from Kando or Chando the sun-god. The former is unseen and incomprehensible. He is the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer and is invoked at the time of taking an oath. The second most important spirit of Santhal cosmology is Marang Buru. His name means 'the great mountain' and he is also known as Lita. He is invoked on all those occasions when offerings are made. Besides these, ancestral gods, deities of the hunt and household spirits also receive worship. Among Santhal village deities are the Jahar Burhi and Moroeko Turuiko (literally five-six, but now representing only one deity). The Santhals also worship boundary deities and deities of the outskirts of the village who have to be appeased by the Naek (priest) or the Kadam Naek. Santhal villages also have a shrine of the Mānjhi or the 'deceased headman' (founder of the village) where the headman worships his ancestors for the benefit of the entire village.

Santhal village organization is particularly elaborate. The headman, or Mānjhi, has two assistants, the Paramanik, who officiates in his absence, and the Jog Mānjhi, who is the censor of public morals in the village. The Godet is the village messenger. Each village has two priests, the Naek, who worships the local deities and the Kadam

Naek, who appeases the unknown and fearful spirits which abound on the limits and outskirts of the village. The panchayat, known as the Kulidrup, is an assembly of all the adults in the village. Above it is the council of headmen, under the leadership of the Parganait, or the divisional headman. The final court is the Lo Bir, or 'hunt-council', in which the people of the entire region are represented. The Santhals have the institution of the Bitlaha, which is a form of severe social punishment including excommunication, details of which are given in a later chapter of this book.

THE ORAONS

In the census of 1941, the Oraons in Bihar numbered 604,485. Of these more than 500,000 lived in the Ranchi district. The Palamau district accounted for more than sixty thousand, while several thousands more were found in Purnea, Champaran, Singhbhum, the Santhal Parganas, and the Hazaribagh, Manbhum and Shahabad districts. The Oraons are a short-statured, narrow-headed and broad-nosed people. The colour of their skin is dark brown, often approaching black; their hair is black and coarse with an occasional tendency to curl. Beards and moustaches appear rather late. The chest is well developed and the eyes are of medium size. The jaws are somewhat projecting, the lips are thick and the nose is depressed at the root. (Pl. II, Fig. 4). The Oraons have a tradition of having come from the South and they seem to have displaced Mundas from many of the areas of the Ranchi district. Their methods of cultivation are advanced compared with those of other tribes in Bihar and they are very responsive to culture contacts.

The Oraon recognizes ten different classes of supernatural powers. His highest divinity is Dharmes, or the Supreme Being, the Creator of the Universe, whose visible symbol is the Sun. The appropriate colour for Dharmes is white and he is provided with no temple or shrine. A libation is offered to him at all sacrifices and when all deities and spirits fail, and the Oraon is in extreme distress, he prays and offers sacrifices to the Supreme Being. The Dharmes is supposed to control all other deities and to be able to see all the actions of both spirits and mortals. After him come the ancestors. Thirdly, we have the village deities such as Chala Pachcho, Darha Deswali and others, who are worshipped by the village priest or Pahan at the Sarna, or sacred grove, on behalf of the entire village at the time of festivals. Fourth come the spirits such as Chandī, the spirit of war and the

hunt and certain of those worshipped by women. Then there are the Khunt Bhuts, or titulary spirits, of the families of the original settlers of the village. Sixth come the household spirits. Next come the spirits, or mysterious powers, residing in, or connected with, certain objects or symbols such as Mandar-Salo or Jatra Khunta. In the eighth class are stray or strong spirits and in the ninth category come the Pugri-Bhuts of individuals who offer sacrifices secretly to such spirits for their own private ends. These are generally connected with magic and witchcraft. Finally come forces of evil known as 'najar gujar' or 'baibhak'.

The most important social institution of the Oraon is the Dhumkuria, or the Boys' Youth Dormitory. This institution has put them on the ethnographic map of the world. They have separate dormitories for girls (Pl. II, Fig. 5). Details of the working and functions of these institutions are given later in this book. The Parha, or panchayat organization, which knits together different villages in a group, is current among the Oraons.

THE KHARIAS

In the census of 1941, the Kharias numbered 89,038. Of these, the vast majority were concentrated in the Gumla and Simdega subdivisions of the Ranchi district. A few thousands were also found in the Singhbhum and Manbhum districts. The Kharias are grouped into three divisions known respectively as the Hill, Dhelki and Dudh Kharias. The Hill Kharias practice a crude type of shifting cultivation and they hunt with bows, arrows and sticks and sometimes with spears. They are adept in tree-climbing and collecting honey and bees-wax, which they sell to other communities. The other two sections of Kharias have taken to settled agriculture.

THE BIRHORS

Of the 2,507 Birhors counted in 1941, most are to be found in the districts of Hazaribagh and Ranchi. Two sections of this tribe are easily distinguishable by their mode of living and by the ecology. The Uthlu, or Bhulia Birhors, who are semi-migratory, move about the forests during the greater part of the year in small family groups of four to ten, carrying with them their household goods and the symbols of their gods. They usually live in huts made of twigs and leaves (Pl. III, Fig. 8). During the rains, most Uthlu Birhors live in semipermanent settlements. Their basic food-supply is procured by

gathering wild forest produce, including honey and bees-wax, by hunting deer and other animals and by catching birds and monkeys. They also collect Chop creepers, from which they make rope for barter in the nearest market. Their economy is clearly dependent on the neighbouring Hindu population. The Jaghi Birhors, on the other hand, lead a more settled existence, and some of them have for a considerable period practised slash-and-burn cultivation, raising a scanty crop of millet, maize and beans.

THE SAURIA PAHARIAS

The Sauria Paharias numbered 58,654 in 1941 and were found mainly in the Santhal Parganas. They live in inaccessible hilly country and are confined to the Godda Rajmahal and Pakur subdivisions. Most of them retain Malto, a tribal language which is akin to the Oraon Kurukh. They are the only tribe who do not possess any totemic clans. They practise shifting cultivation and the forest is the mainstay of their existence. They use a digging stick to dibble seeds into holes made in the ground. They also grow Sabai grass which is used on a large scale for paper manufacture.

THE MAL PAHARIAS

The Mal Paharias, who numbered 40,496 in the Santhal Parganas in 1941, are a Hinduized section of the Paharia tribe. They employ more advanced methods of cultivation, invariably using plough and bullocks to till the small table-lands of the plateau, on which they raise quite substantial dry crops. Prolonged contact with the Hindu population has led to the adoption of such customs as child marriage, polygamy and so on. They follow the marriage rituals observed by lower-caste Hindus, respect Brāhmaṇas, cremate the dead and observe ceremonial death pollution (sootak). Hindu deities such as Mahādeo, Kāli, Lakshmī and others, receive habitual worship from them. They speak a corrupt form of Bengali.

THE BIRJIAS

The Birjias are a small tribe, only 2,075 strong in 1931, found in the Mahuadanr police station of the Palamau district. Some have settled as cultivators in the valleys in the south, but the bulk live in groups of two or three families on the spurs of the highest hills. They practise slash-and-burn cultivation, but do not use the plough or even the hoe. They plant seeds in small holes drilled in the soil with a pointed bamboo. They wander from hill to hill and supplement

their diet by roots and herbs and barter other jungle produce for grain, salt and tobacco from the lowlands.

THE ASURS

The Asurs, who numbered 4,388 in 1941, are a small tribe found in the Lohardaga, Bishunpur, Ghagra, Chainpur and Mahuadanr police stations of the Ranchi and Palamau districts. Their original occupation was iron-smelting, but very few now live by this profession. Because of the scarcity of iron ore in these areas and the lack of facilities for obtaining free fuel from the jungle, this occupation has practically disappeared. Most of the Asurs now practice jhuming on the Netarhat plateau. Dalton is inclined to connect them with the Asurs who, according to Munda tradition, were destroyed by the Sing-Bongā. It has been conjectured that they were the descendents of the original inhabitants of the Chotanagpur plateau, that they were here even before the Mundas and that they were driven out by successive tribes into inhospitable hills and forests. Another conjecture is that they are a branch of the Mundas, who, like the Turis, split off from the rest of the tribe on account of their profession. The ancient Asurs, about whom there are copious references in Vedic, Epic and later literature, were a matrilineal people worshipping female goddesses and were spread over the whole of Northern India from Punjab to Magadha.

Asur sites have been discovered from the northern banks of the Kanchi near Kalamati village in Ranchi police station to the Phuljhar river on the borders of Singhbhum. Sarat Chandra Roy found villages here and there which contained the remains of ancient brick buildings, stone temples and other structures, cinerary urns and huge slabs and columns of sepulchral stones, mostly silted up. These are locally attributed to an ancient people called the Asurs. Traces of iron-smelting, copper ornaments, gold coins, stone implements and beads, have been found in some of the excavations.

The Asurs are now living in abject poverty and are almost on the verge of starvation, but efforts are being made by the State government to rehabilitate this tribe economically. Alternative occupations suited to the Asur areas are being popularized among them and a welfare plan has been put into operation.

THE BHUMIJ

The Bhumij, or Bhumij Kols, who numbered 166,044 in 1941,

occupy parts of the Manbhum district west and south of the Kasai river. They are said to be the earliest settlers in Manbhum. In physical appearance they resemble the Munda, to whom they are ethnically related. They are dark brown in complexion, have thick noses and lips, broad chests, well-developed hands and are short in stature. Some of them intermarry with the Mundas of the south-eastern portion of the Ranchi district. In the western part, they have retained their religion, customs and original language to a greater extent than in the east and north. As early as 1833, the influence of Bengali on their speech was marked and constant contact with Hindus led to their adoption of Hindu customs. Their totemic exogamous clans are fast being forgotten and they have adopted the surname of 'Singh'. Their agricultural technique is not at all advanced.

The Bhumij regard themselves as Hindus and employ Brāhmaṇa priests for marriage and 'śrādh' ceremonies. Their claim is accepted by the Hindus, though their exact position in the caste heirarchy is not well defined. This does not mean that they have fully assimilated the essential elements of Hinduism and completely abandoned their tribal religion, for they still worship their village deities. Among the benevolent Hindu gods worshipped by them mention may be made of Dharam Deotā, Durgā, Śiva, Goram Deotā, Ganeśa and Lakshmī. They also pay obeisance to certain malevolent spirits, such as Baram Bhut, Churkin, Dākin, Jugin and others. Manasā-mā and Kāli-mā are regarded with a certain amount of fear but prove beneficial if propitiated in time. Bhagwan has replaced Sing-Bongā as the supreme deity. They have also adopted Hindu idols as their own. Offerings include rice, rice-beer, fowls, goats, and sheep. The influence of the 'Laya', the traditional village priest, has diminished with the employment of Brāhmaṇa priests. Vaishṇava mendicants are greatly respected by them.

The Bhumij are an example of a tribe being transformed into a caste of Hindus owing to diverse factors. Divorce and the remarriage of widows are allowed. Formerly they buried their dead in a bone-burial ground called Harshali; now they cremate them on the banks of a river. They mourn for a period of ten days, which is also the period of pollution. The 'śrādh' is performed on the tenth day.

THE CHEROS

The Cheros numbered 19,337 in 1941. Four-fifths of them lived in the Daltonganj, Latehar and Patan thanas. There are two

divisions among them, Barahazar and Terahazar or Birbandhi. The former rank as the higher and include some of the descendents of the ruling family in Palamau. Wealthier families among them and the Terahazar have married into local Rajput families and now call themselves Chauhan Rajputs. Once the lords of Palamau, the Cheros have never forgotten that they were a great people and that their descent is an honourable one. Only the poorest condescend to guide the plough and none like to carry loads on their heads. They are extravagant and fond of display and often run into debt. Their distinctive physical traits have been modified by their alliances with Hindu families which their large possessions enabled them to secure. They have the Dravidian physiognomy and vary in colour, but are generally light brown. Their facial features are marked by high cheek-bones, small eyes obliquely set and eye-brows to correspond, low, broad noses and large mouths with protuberant lips. Their religion is in a state of transition. The Chero worship has distinct traces of non-Aryan descent. For the worship of Hindu gods, they employ Brāhmaṇas and their spiritual guides are either Brāhmaṇas or Gharbāri Gosāins. They also worship tribal deities, and goats, fowls, sweets and wine are offered to them in Aghan to secure a good harvest. In these sacrifices Brāhmaṇas take no part. This worship is conducted by a Baigā, or priest, who belongs to one of the aboriginal tribes.

The Cheros fomerly lived in a sub-Himalayan tract called Morang, but migrated to the Kumaon and thence made their way south to Bhojpur, where they reigned for seven generations. The fifth ruler of the time, Sahabal Rāi, invaded Champaran with a large army. He was defeated by a force sent by Jehāngir and taken to Delhi, where he died fighting a tiger. His son Bhagwat Rāi was the head of a long line of Chero chiefs who reigned in Palamau for 200 years. The most famous ruler of the dynasty was Medini Rāi, the 'Just'. Cheros took part in the Kol rebellion of 1832 and offered stiff resistance to the British during the War of Independence in 1857.

THE THARUS

The Tharus are an example of a community which, in the course of fifty or sixty years, has completely forgotten its tribal culture and is now looked upon as consisting of backward Hindus. In the census of 1941, they numbered nearly 38,000 and were classified as a Scheduled Tribe, but since they do not like being known as a tribe, they are not now included in the list. In 1948 they were recognized as caste-Hindus

by an order of the Nepal government. They live in the sub-montane Tarai, in the northern part of the Champaran district. This is essentially a forest area, damp and malarious. The Tharus claim that their original home was in the Thar district of Rajputana, whence they were driven by Muslim inroads. Women are considered among them as being higher in status than the men and they do not allow their husbands, or any male, to come into the kitchen, nor will they eat any food of which their husbands or sons have already partaken, customs which go against the fundamentals of Hindu family life. Tharu women are comely in appearance and have fair complexions.

Intermarriage between eight of the Tharu sub-castes is prohibited. They recognize divorce, and divorced women can remarry. The Tharus worship Kāli, Śiva, and Mahābīr and observe Hindu festivals. They speak the Bhojpuri dialect common in that area. They rear pigs but only a small percentage of them eat pork. Agriculture is their main occupation. They keep large herds of cattle for the breeding of bullocks and for milk. They trade in young cattle and buffaloes, and work as carters and woodmen. They preservẹ dried fish for the rainy season. They depend on the primitive system of irrigation by means of temporary dams on hilly streams and 'pynes'. They are backward in their agricultural technique.

They imitate Hindus in all religious ceremonials and look upon themselves as belonging to a superior caste. They are an instance of a tribe being fully converted into a Hindu caste within living memory.

The Languages of Bihar

Dr Grierson has named the western Magadhi languages as Bihari. In this term he includes three dialects, Magahi, Maithili and Bhojpuri, but it seems to be more convenient, less confusing and certainly far less controversial, to use the more usual term Eastern Hindi and to include these languages in it.

Eastern Hindi is spoken in one of its forms in the Gorakhpur and Vārānasi divisions of Uttar Pradesh. In the south, a corrupt form of it is spoken on the plateau of Chotanagpur, and from the Himalayan Tarai in the north to Manbhum in the south, it is extensively used.

For a number of reasons, Hindi always has been and will continue to be the medium of instruction in Bihar. It is the literary language of the State and it can boast of several gifted Bihari writers. Both the Patna and Bihar Universities are adopting it as the ultimate medium

and the Government of Bihar has declared it to be the State language. By an Act of Legislature, the target date for using Hindi in all state transactions has been fixed not later than November 1957.

But although Hindi is highly respected as a literary language in Bihar, the speakers of Maithili, Magahi and Bhojpuri are deeply attached to their own dialects, the roots of which are firmly entrenched in the emotional life of the people. Hindi would not entirely replace them. And why should it? Many words of these dialects are being used in Hindi by competent Bihari writers. At present, there is no rivalry between Hindi and these three languages. In fact, while holding their own, they supplement Hindi.

MAITHILI

Maithili is essentially the language of Mithilā. Its pristine centre is the northern half of Darbhanga district, but it is also spoken in parts of the Muzaffarpur, Bhagalpur, Saharsa, and Purnea districts in slightly varying forms. It is spoken at home by more than ten million people and is the only language of Bihar which has an ancient literary history. Maithili prose literature is even older than Hindi. As early as 1324, Jyotirishwar Thakur wrote a prose work in Maithili. Other literary works, such as poetry, drama and stories, are also abundant, while a number of monthly magazines are also published in this language. The greatest Maithili poet was Vidyāpati (15th century). He is claimed however, as their own poet by both Hindi and Bengali-speaking people. A contemporary of his, Umāpati, also wrote prose and poetry, and in recent times Dr Ganganath Jha, Dr Amarnath Jha, and Ishanath Jha, have enriched its prose literature. Poets like 'Yatri', humorists like Pandit Harimohan Jha, research scholars like Dr Umesha Mishra and Dr Subhadra Jha, have made Maithili a living force. Though ancient Maithili had a distinct script which was akin to Bengali, it is now most commonly written in Devanāgri. Maithili has a bewildering mass of verbal forms, but only two numbers and two genders, while the verbal form is changed only in the past and future tenses.

MAGAHI

Magahi, or Magadhi, is spoken in the districts of Patna, Gaya and Hazaribagh and in the western part of Palamau, as well as parts of Monghyr and Bhagalpur. On its eastern frontier, Magahi meets Bengali. Grierson called the dialect of this region Eastern Magahi.

It is not credited with much polish. While Maithili prospered under the influence of learned Brāhmaṇas, Magahi continues to be the language of the common people. It has no indigenous written literature, though a number of folk-tales and popular songs have been handed down for centuries from mouth to mouth. Strolling bards recite long epic poems in this dialect, and it was because of this that the word 'Magadhi' came to mean 'a bard'. Kaithi is the script generally used for it. The pronunciation in Magahi is not so broad as in Maithili and there are a number of verbal forms for each person.

BHOJPURI

Bhojpuri is spoken in the western districts of Bihar such as Champaran, Saran, Shahabad, Palamau and Ranchi. Although the Ranchi district is mainly populated by Adivasis, the common language of the people is Sadari or Sadani, which is a form of Bhojpuri. Bhojpuri-speakers are also found in north-western Muzaffarpur and the Pirpanti and Colgong police stations of the Bhagalpur district. There are more than ten million Bhojpuri-speaking people in Bihar. It is spoken also in the Vārānasi and Gorakhpur divisions of Uttar Pradesh. Bhojpuri areas have helped much in the growth of Hindi literature. Although Bhojpuri has no such old written literature as Maithili has, the love with which its speakers cherish it is just as great.

Bhojpuri is so called after the language of Bhojpur, a pergana of the Shahabad district. The Bhojpuri people have a distinct and virile tradition and were famous in the past for their bravery. Bhojpuri is spoken in various forms and its grammatical structure differs in many respects from the other two languages in Bihar. It has peculiarities of declension and conjugation not found elsewhere. On the whole, its grammar is simpler than that of Maithili and Magahi. Except in a few isolated instances, the form of the verb depends only on the subject. Bhojpuri is written in Kaithi, a script ascribed to the Kayasthas, the scribes of India, but this script is nowadays being given up by educated people in favour of Devanāgri.

A mass of oral literature is extant in Bhojpuri in the form of folk-songs, folk-tales and legends and it abounds in proverbs and riddles. In the works of such saintly poets as Kabir, Dharamdas, Dharnidas, Daryadas, and Lakshmi Sakhi, the influence of Bhojpuri is immense. In recent times, many collections of folk literature have been published

by Grierson, Ram Naresh Tripathi, Krishnadeva Upadhyay, Durga Shankar, Prasad Singh and W. G. Archer, and Sankata Prasad. The famous poem 'Batohia' written by Raghubir Narayan and the play entitled 'Bidesia' by Bhikāri Thākur have made history by their popularity. Bhikāri Thākur is the people's poet in Bhojpuri and in his poems are reflected the joys and sorrows, the toils and tears of the simple rural folk of his area.

BENGALI AND ORIYA

Besides these three languages, Bengali is spoken by small numbers in areas contiguous to Bengal such as in the Purnea, Santhal Parganas, Purulia, Dhanbad and Singhbhum districts. It is also spoken by Bengalis long settled in different parts of Bihar. The total number of Bengali-speaking people in Bihar in 1951 was 1,759,719. The recent transfer of territory to Bengal has reduced this number to about half a million throughout the State. Similarly Oriya is spoken by nearly 300,000 people in the district of Singhbhum, which is contiguous to Orissa. The total number of Oriya-speaking people in Bihar in 1951 was 313,340, but most of the Bengalis and Oriyas are bilingual, which means that they also speak Hindi or any other important language of the region they inhabit.

THE DRAVIDIAN LANGUAGES

The second group of languages spoken in Bihar is the Dravidian. There is a tradition among the Oraons that they came from South India bringing with them a language of Dravidian stock. There are two representatives of this group; Kurukh, spoken by the Oraons, and Malto spoken by the Sauria Paharias. The name 'Kurukh' is derived from an obsolete Dravidian word meaning 'man'. Malto is allied to Kurukh, and Sauria Paharias who speak Malto, are considered offshoots of the Oraons. These two tongues belong to the intermediate group of Dravidian languages and are quite distinct from both the Aryan and the Austric groups. They differ in their pronunciation, modes of indicating gender, declension of nouns, method of indicating the relationship between verb and object, numerical system, principle of conjugation, methods of indicating the negative and in their vocabularies. Kurukh and Malto represent a Dravidian enclave in a region of Munda speech. Kurukh is more closely connected with ancient Tamil and Kannada than with any other Dravidian language. It has no literature, though efforts have

recently been made through the Kurukh Kathā Jātrā, to develop one. It is written both in Devanāgri and Roman scripts.

MALTO

Malto is the language of the Sauria Paharias who live in the northern Santhal Parganas. It has borrowed largely from the Santhali and Bengali vocabularies. Doubts have recently been cast on the validity of classifying Malto as belonging to the Dravidian group, because some of its characteristics are not found in the Dravidian languages. Malto has no literature of its own.

THE AUSTRIC GROUP

The third group of languages is Austric. It was Max Müller who established for the first time the existence of the Munda family of languages as an independent body of speech apart from the Dravidian and who gave it a name. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Wilhelm Schmidt proved that Mon-Khmer formed a link between the Munda languages of India and the languages of Indonesia, grouping the first two with Khasi and some other minor forms of language, under the name of the Austro-Asiatic languages. Going further, he has shown that the languages of Indonesia, Melanesia and Polynesia also form a group, which he calls Austronesic. Thus the Austric languages were shown to stretch from Madagascar as far as Easter Island, off the coast of South America.

The Munda languages are many in Bihar and are mainly spoken by tribes. Mundari, the language of the Munda, is written in both the Devanāgri and Roman scripts. It is an ancient language with a rich vocabulary and an intricate grammar and its wealth of folk-songs is now being written down. Hoffmann's great work, *The Encyclopaedia Mundarica,* shows the wide range of ideas and concepts that are to be found in Mundari; yet the most important tribal language of the Munda group in respect of the number of speakers, is Santhali, the numerous folk-tales of which have been compiled by Bodding. It is not in the least archaic and a weekly paper is published in it with original articles by a large number of contributors. Ho, Kharia and Birhori are spoken by the tribes bearing those names. The structure of these languages is the same and the difference generally lies in their vocabularies. A person with a sound knowledge of Mundari can easily make himself understood among all the tribes of the Mundari-speaking group.

The most important feature of the linguistic position in Chotanagpur is the widening range of bilingualism. A large proportion of speakers of the tribal languages speak some other language as well. This is the result of contact and facilitates the communication of new ideas. Here are some figures:—

Mother Tongue	*Total number of speakers*	*Second Language*	*Number*
Santhali	1,720,529	Hindi	222,046
		Bengali	200,175
Mundari	500,342	Hindi	143,696
		Bengali	6,165
Ho	418,223	Hindi	42,142
		Oriya	28,957
Kharia	69,787	Hindi	28,278
		Mundari	1,896
		Oraon	1,786
Oraon	401,203	Hindi	205,782
Malto	23,857	Hindi	972
		Bengali	1,180

Besides these there is another language spoken in Chotanagpur which is known as Sadari, or Gawari. It is pure Bhojpuri with an admixture of tribal words and is understood by most of the tribals who live in the towns and even by those in the interior. This language has spread through the influence of up-country merchants and zamindars and so wide is its diffusion that it is actually the *lingua franca* of Chotanagpur. As it is not a cultured language but only a dialect and because it is generally the second language of the speakers, people counted as speaking this language as their mother tongue numbered only fifty-six in the census of 1951!

Having dealt with the general aspects of the land and people of Bihar, we now pass on to their history.

IV

PRE-MAURYAN PERIOD

Political History and Administration up to 325 B.C.

I. Introductory

HISTORY is a record of the achievements of men who live in organized groups. The history of every country should therefore properly begin with the earliest organized settlement of men in that country. But there is no country where the first settlers have left any actual records of their doings, though from the relics they have left behind in the shape of the implements used by them, or, in some cases, the pictures they drew on the walls of their cave dwellings we can form very rudimentary ideas of the lives they led. These are not sufficient however, for the writing of their political history, for that requires written records.

At a certain stage of its cultural development every group of civilized human beings feels a curiosity about its past history and this need is met by the collection of the tales and legends of its forefathers. These were passed orally from generation to generation until, with the invention of writing and a sufficient supply of writing materials, it was possible to reduce traditional history to the written word.

In every land the beginnings of history take the form of legends. This was the case with Greece and Rome, two ancient countries which have been justly famous for the development of historiography. There too, legends take the place of more or less authentic history, till the fifth century B.C.

The case is similar in India, but here we do not come across any authentic history of ancient India written by Indians. Fortunately, it has been possible to make up this deficiency to a certain extent from archaeological and literary sources which have enabled us to draw an outline of the political history of India from about the sixth

century B.C. For the period earlier than that, we have to rely on legends and stories which are mostly contained in books written after that date. While it is necessary to know something of these legends, in would be a mistake to regard them as historical facts and so far as Bihar is concerned, we are obliged to cull this legendary history from a study of the Epics, the Purāṇas and other works of the kind.

II. The Legendary History of Bihar

According to tradition, all the ruling chiefs of India of the earliest times were descended from a primeval king, Manu Vaivasvata, son of Vivasvan, the Sun. He had nine sons and a daughter named Ilā, who was sometimes changed into a man, or according to another form of the legend, became a *Kimpuruṣa* (literally, is he a man?) Saudyumna, who was a man one month, and a woman the next. One of these sons, Nabhagodishta, or Nabhanedishtha, settled in North Bihar and established the line of kings that ruled over the kingdom of Vaiśālī in the Muzaffarpur district. From another son, Kārusha, descended the numerous Kshatriya clans who occupied the country which was named after him and which extended from modern Rewa eastwards to the river Son. Nimi (or Nemi) son of Ikshvāku, the eldest son of Manu, is called Videha, and the dynasty founded by him in North Bihar is also called Videha. But from the second king, Mithi Janaka, the capital was known as Mithilā and the kings, Maithilas or Janakas. The kings were known collectively as Janakas, though many were also named individually as such. The descendants of Saudyumna settled in east and south Bihar.

Ilā, the daughter of Manu, bore to Buddha a son named Pururavas Aila, the 'progenitor' of the great Aila dynasty which reigned at Pratishthāna (Allahabad). From him descended Anu, whose descendants, the Anavas, founded a kingdom in east Bihar, under Titikṣu. Anu moved eastward beyond the Videha and Vaiśālī kingdoms and occupied the country originally settled by the Saudyumnas. The Anava kingdom, known as the kingdom in the east, was afterwards divided among Bali's five sons into five kingdoms, known as Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Pundra, and Suhma.

At about the time when the Saudyumnas lost east Bihar, their settlements in south Bihar were being conquered by Amurtaraya, son of Kuśa, king of Kānyakubja, who was also descended from Pururavas. According to some accounts, the conqueror was Amurtaraya's son Gayā, an eminent king who reigned in the Gaya District and

whose dynasty was overthrown by Vasu, fourth successor to Kuru, who conquered the kingdom of Chedi and the adjoining countries as far as Magadha. Vasu divided his extensive kingdom among his five sons. The eldest, Bṛihadratha, was given Magadha, while another, Yadu, had Kārusha. The famous dynasty founded by Bṛihadratha is treated in some detail in the Purāṇas, and its rule comes down to the historical period of Bihar.

We have given above a bare outline of the legendary accounts of the rise of the different kingdoms in Bihar. Various details are contained in the Epics and Purāṇas, but it is not necessary to refer to all of them. It will suffice to state that some of these kingdoms must have grown very powerful, since their rulers are included among the sixteen Chakravartis, i.e. sovereigns, who established their suzerainty over extensive regions surrounding their own kingdoms. Thus Marutta, king of Vaiśālī, is called both Chakravarti and Samrāt (universal sovereign). This kingdom was so named after king Viśāla, a remote successor of Marutta, who founded Viśāla, or Vaiśālī, as his capital. Correctly speaking, only the kings following Viśāla should be referred to as Vaiśālaka and their territory as the kingdom of Vaiśālī, but for the sake of convenience these titles have been antedated and applied from the beginning of the dynasty.

This kingdom was invaded by the Haihayas in the course of their eastern conquests, but their progress was checked by the Vaiśālakas. Kings Lomapada and Karṇa of Aṅga and Jarāsandha of Magadha occupy a prominent place in epic literature. The Purāṇas and Epics give a detailed list of the Anava, Videha and Vaiśāla kings.

III. Bihar in Vedic Literature

The rule that legendary accounts must not be regarded as sober history is particularly applicable to the outline of history given in the preceding section, because it is in conflict with information supplied by Vedic literature, the earliest and most reliable account of ancient India that we possess. In order to understand the difference between the two sources, it is necessary to refer to those references to Bihar which we find in Vedic literature. These are very casual and give us only here and there a few glimpses of Bihar; but still they are of great importance for our present purpose. For instance, the *Ṛigveda* (III. 53.14) mentions a territory called Kikata as being ruled over by Pramaganda. According to Yāska's *Nirukta* (VI.32),

Kikata was the name of a non-Aryan country, but in later works. Kikata is given as being a synonym for Magadha. Geographical references in the hymns of the *Ṛigveda* also leave no doubt that Bihar was outside the purview of those who composed them. The rivers most often mentioned are those of the Punjab; occasionally the Gangā and very rarely the Yamunā and the Sarayu are also referred to, but not as being important. Neither the Kośala nor the Videha, so famous in later Vedic literature, is mentioned in the *Ṛigveda*. The obvious inference is that up to the time when the *Ṛigveda-Saṁhitā* was composed, the Aryan settlements beyond the border of the Punjab had not made much progress. This is further corroborated by the well-known story of Videgha Mathava, as told in the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* (I.4, 1.10ff.). It is said that this king started with his priest and sacrificial fire from the banks of the Sarasvati river in eastern Punjab and proceeded towards the east. They crossed many rivers and travelled a long way, but when they came to the Sadānīra the fire refused to cross it. Later (i.e. at the time the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* was composed) a settlement was made on the east bank of the river which came to be known as Videha, after the tribal name Videgha of king Mathava. This indicates that before the Brāhmaṇa period, the progress of the Aryans was checked on the banks of the Sadānīra and that after some time the Aryans settled in Videha, i.e. North Bihar, beyond the Sadānīra. This river, which formed the boundary between Kośalas and Videhas, has been identified by some with the Rāpti and by others with the Gandak.

Not only were there no settlements of Aryans in Bihar in the early Vedic period, but they had nothing but contempt for the people who lived there. The peoples of Vaṅga and Vagadha are described as birds, or at least referred to in the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* in a very uncomplimentary manner and Vagadha has been plausibly identified with later Magadha (South Bihar). The name Magadha, later to become so famous, occurs for the first time in the *Atharvaveda Saṁhitā* in a verse (v. 22.14) which expresses a desire that the fever (from which presumably the Aryans were suffering a great deal) might visit other peoples, including the Aṅgas and Magadhas. The *Yajurveda* includes the people of Magadha in the list of victims at Purushamedha. Further, the Magadhas are associated with the Vrātyas, who are described as being very different from the Aryans in their culture and as living outside the orbit of Brāhmaṇism. These and other references leave us in no doubt that, during the age represented by the early

Saṁhitās, the whole of Bihar was beyond the pale of Aryan culture, which only gradually established itself in this region during the period represented by the Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas. Indeed the position in this respect is so clear that Pargiter held the view that the Magadhas, as well as the Aṅgas, were non-Aryan peoples who came from beyond the sea and settled in Bihar. Of this oversea migration, however, we have no definite proof.

Now the above inference from Vedic literature is wholly inconsistent with the view that Bihar was ruled by Aryan kings from the time of Manu, i.e. the very beginning of the Aryan settlement of India, as the accounts in the Epics and Purāṇas, noted above, would have us believe. According to these accounts, the Aryans had spread over the whole of India by the time of the Bharata War, and the comparative genealogical tables of ruling families prepared by Pargiter indicate that more than ninety generations of kings had ruled in Videha and Vaiśāla before that event which is variously dated between 3140 and 950 B.C. If we remember that the *Ṛigveda Saṁhitā* was probably composed between 2000 and 1500 B.C. and had not received its final form by the time of the Bharata War, or at least not long before that event, the incongruity of the two accounts becomes obvious.

Pargiter has made an attempt to defend the account of the Purāṇas and Epics by various bold hypotheses concerning the early history of India. These include the assumptions that Aryans did not enter India from the north-west and gradually proceed towards the east, as is generally supposed, but came from the mid-Himalayan region; that the Iranians were an offshoot of the Indo-Aryans and that they migrated from India to Iran; that Brāhmaṇism was not an Aryan institution, but that the earliest Brāhmaṇs were connected with non-Aryan peoples and were established among them when the Aryans entered India; that only the families of Pururavas and Saudyumna, who descended from Ilā, were Ailas or Aryans, and that the other families descended from Manu, i.e., most of the royal families described in the Epics and Purāṇas, belonged to non-Aryan stock, and so on. These bold and far-reaching conclusions cannot be discussed here, but they indicate that if we accept as true even the outline of the legendary accounts given above, we must begin to unlearn most of the things that we have learnt hitherto about Indian history.

Pargiter has put his faith in the Epics and Purāṇas, while the scholars whose views now hold the field have placed reliance on Vedic literature.

There is not only a great deal of difference, but even a conflict between these two classes of evidence. The Epics and Purāṇas, at least in the forms in which we have them now, were not composed till the beginning of the Christian era, that is, about two to three thousand years after the occurrence of the events they profess to describe. On the other hand, the casual references in Vedic literature represent almost contemporary views. It would therefore be unreasonable and unscientific to accept the evidence of the Epics and Purāṇas when they cannot be harmonized with the state of things described in contemporary Vedic literature.

IV. Beginnings of the Historical Period

The Bharata War, which forms the central theme of the great epic *Mahābhārata*, is a great landmark in the traditional history of India. There is now a general consensus of opinion among scholars that this great war is a historical fact, though their views differ widely as to the time when it occurred. According to orthodox tradition, it took place in 3102 B.C. and marks the end of the Dvāpara and beginning of the Kali age. Various scholars, relying on the astronomical data supplied by the *Mahābhārata*, have suggested divergent dates, ranging between 3140 and 1931 B.C. Another set of scholars have attempted to fix the date on the basis of certain statements and other data contained in the Purāṇas, and the dates suggested by them vary widely between 1400 and 950 B.C. These may be regarded as more probable than the former.

According to the traditional account mentioned above, there were two important kingdoms in Bihar at the time of Bharata War, the kingdom of Videha, which probably comprised also the old kingdom of Viśāla, in north Bihar, and that of Magadha in south Bihar. Great prominence is given to Magadha, which was then ruled by the Barhadrathas, who were the descendants of Bṛihadratha. King Jarāsandha of this dynasty, who flourished shortly before the Great War, is described in the Epics as a powerful emperor who claimed suzerainty over a large number of kings. However, he met his doom at the hands of Bhīma, helped by Kṛishṇa, and after his death his empire was split up into two parts. Magadha proper was ruled by his son Sahadeva, while the rest of the empire was under Karṇa, one of the great Kaurava generals in the Bharata War. Sahadeva joined the Pāndavas and was killed in the Great War, but his family continued to rule in Magadha after that event, with Girivraja (a group of hills),

as its capital. The ruins of this far-famed city, associated with the memory of Jarāsandha and Kṛishṇa and surrounded by seven hills, lie near the modern town of Rajgir. The Purāṇas give a regular list of the kings of this dynasty with their reignal periods, but no other details. The dynasty ended with Ripunjaya, twenty-second in descent from Sahadeva.

According to the Paurāṇic account, Ripunjaya was killed by his minister, who then placed his own son Pradyota on the throne. After Pradyota and his four successors had ruled for 138 years, Śiśunāga defeated the last of them and made himself king of Magadha, with his capital at Girivraja and installed his son meanwhile as the ruler of Kāsi. This last statement implies that when Śiśunāga had supplanted the Pradyotas of Magadha, he ruled over the Kāsi region.

The Purāṇas then name the nine successors of Śiśunāga and the ten Śaiśunāga kings are said to have ruled for 360 (or 163) years. Bimbisāra and his son Ajātaśatru are named as the fifth and sixth in descent from Śiśunāga. This account differs materially from what we know of Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru from other sources, particularly the Buddhist traditions embodied in Ceylonese chronicles. Scholars are now generally disposed to accept these as the more authentic and hold that the Pradyotas, who are described in the Purāṇas as the successors of the Barhadrathas in Magadha, really ruled in Avanti, and that the kingdom of Magadha passed immediately from the Barhadrathas to Bimbisāra. Thus, instead of being the fifth king of the Śaiśunāga family, he was really the founder of a new royal dynasty in Magadha which ruled for several generations before it was supplanted by Śiśunāga.

Rather than that we should enter into a controversy as to the merits of these two views, we may provisionally accept the latter and reconstruct the history of Magadha after the end of the Barhadratha dynasty accordingly.

Before we proceed further, it may be noted that a complete picture of the political history of Bihar at a definite period of time, is afforded for the first time by accounts in Buddhist scriptures. These have preserved a list of sixteen great states which flourished in North India at, or shortly before, the time when Gautama Buddha lived and preached. Some of these states were ruled by kings, while others were non-monarchical and of a republican type, the nature of which will be discussed later. It would appear that four of the kingdoms,

Magadha, Kosala (Awadh), Vatsa (with its capital at Kauśāmbī to the west of Allahabad), and Avanti (Mālava, with its capital at Ujjain) were more powerful than others, among which Magadha and Aṅga (Bhagalpur) alone are to be included in modern Bihar. The most famous of the republican states, was the Vrijjian confederacy, celebrated alike in Buddhist and Jaina literature. It consisted of eight or nine clans, including the Videhas, Lichchhavis, and Jñātṛikas and Vrijjis, the last-named being the most prominent. It represented the old kingdoms of Videha and Viśāla, mentioned in the Paurāṇic and Epic accounts, but we do not know for certain when the monarchical was replaced by the republican form of government in this region. Another republican clan, closely associated with Mahāvīra, the founder of the Jaina sect, was the Malla, who had two settlements, one in Pawa, not far from Rājgṛiha, and the other at Kuśīnara, or Kuśīnagara, in the Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh.

When Gautama Buddha began to preach, Bimbisāra was on the throne of Magadha and he died after Ajātaśatru had reigned for eight years. These statements, which may be regarded as authentic, supply us with definite data for the fixing of the dates of these two kings. Unfortunately, there is no unanimity of opinion among scholars regarding the date of Gautama Buddha. According to an old Buddhist tradition preserved in Ceylon and now generally accepted all over the Buddhist world, the great Buddha died in 544 B.C. and this is the epoch of the Buddha Era now in use in Ceylon and other Buddhist countries. It is in accordance with this reckoning that the two-thousand-five-hundredth anniversary of the Parinirvāṇa (the Great Passing Away) of Buddha was celebrated in India and all over the Buddhist world in 1956.

But some modern scholars are not disposed to accept this date as it is in conflict with certain other Buddhist traditions which are recorded in the Ceylonese chronicles. For example, it is definitely held by Buddhists that the coronation of the great Maurya Emperor Aśoka took place 218 years after the death of Buddha and, as will be shown later, the date of Aśoka's coronation may be fixed with a tolerable degree of certainty, in or about 269 B.C. In that case the date of the death of Buddha may be fixed at 487 B.C. According to a Chinese tradition, this event occurred in 486, a date now generally accepted. The accession of Bimbisāra, who ruled for fifty-two years, may thus be placed in 545 B.C., and that of Ajātaśatru, in the eighth year of whose reign Buddha died, about 493 B.C.

Map II


PRE-MAURYAN INDIA
Miles
BACTRIANA
Kabul
GANDHARA
Rajpura
Taxila
ARACHOSIA
MADRA
Sindhu R.
SAUVIRA
Indraprastha
VIRATA
Hastinapura
Mathura
USINARA
KOSALA
Ayodhya
VATSA
VIDEHA
VAJJI
Vaisali
Pataliputra
PRAGJYOTISHA
PUNDRA
KIRATAS
ANGA
Champa
Rajgriha
CHEDI
AVANTI
PARIVATRA
ANARTA
Shriguakachcha
Narmada R.
VIDARBHA
MEKALA
Mahanadi R.
MULAKA
Indravatia
Tel R.
Vaitarani R
Rishikulya R.
Langulini R.
Suvarnarekha R.
MUTIBAS
Krishna R.
Godavari R.
DANDAKA
Pinaka R.
Kaveri R.
PASCHIMA PAYODHI
PURVA SAGARA
Tamraparni R.

V. MAGADHA (*c.* 545—325 B.C.)

1. BIMBISĀRA

In the Buddhist and Jaina texts Bimbisāra is given the epithet Seniya or Srenika. It has accordingly been suggested that he began his life as a Senāpati or general, and that later he usurped the throne. This fits in with the fact that he founded a new dynasty. It is not unlikely that he usurped the throne of Magadha after murdering the last Barhadratha king Ripunjaya, as stated in the Purāṇas, though the latter name Pulika, who is referred to as a minister, as the regicide.

All this however, is inconsistent with the express statement in the Ceylonese chronicle *Mahāvaṁsa*, that Bimbisāra was fifteen years old when he was anointed king by his father. It is also in conflict with the natural inference that is to be drawn from Buddhist tradition that he founded a new royal dynasty, and is more in agreement with the Paurāṇic statement that he belonged to the royal family founded by Śiśunāga. It is not easy to explain away this inconsistency in the Buddhist chronicle, and the suggestion that Bimbisāra's father was no more than a petty chief of south Bihar hardly meets the situation. It is more likely that, having seized the kingdom of Magadha, the father placed his son on its throne. Some such thing might be the basis of the Paurāṇic version that the last Barhadratha ruler of Magadha was killed by his minister, who placed his own son on the throne of Magadha.

If we discard the Paurāṇic genealogy, we know very little of Bimbisāra's family and parentage that can be regarded as certain. According to some authorities his father was named Bhattiya or Mahāpadma, but there is no reference to any such person in the *Mahāvaṁsa*. Aśvaghosha, in his *Buddhacharita* (xi. 2), describes Bimbisāra as being a scion of the Haryaṇka family. This is more probably a derivative epithet, pointing to the distinctive mark or emblem of the family rather than its proper designation, though Haryanga of Champā, mentioned in the *Harivaṁsa* and Purāṇas, may be another form of the same name. Bhandarkar has suggested that Bimbisāra and not Śiśunāga, belonged to the great Nāga dynasty, for Śiśu means child, which shows that Śiśunāga belonged to the little Nāga dynasty. But this is nothing but pure conjecture and on the whole, in the present state of our knowledge, the question of Bimbisāra's family must be left open.

The kingdom of Magadha seems to have been hostile towards

Aṅga, its neighbour to the east, which had its capital at Champā, near modern Bhagalpur. This city was greatly renowned in those days and the kingdom of Aṅga was at one time very powerful. The reference to Rājgṛiha as a city of Aṅga may indicate a temporary occupation of a part of Magadha by the Aṅga ruler. According to Paurāṇic tradition, king Satanika of Kauśāmbi, attacked Champā, which was then ruled over by Dadhivāhana. This is in a way corroborated by the Jaina story that in the course of the confusion caused by this invasion, Dadhivāhana's daughter Chandanā, or Chandrabālā, the first female to embrace Jainism after Mahāvīra's death, was carried away by robbers. As Magadha lay between Kauśāmbi and Champā, Satanika's invasion of the latter city is evidence of the political weakness of Magadha shortly before the time of Bimbisāra, who was contemporary of Satanika's son Udayana. This is also corroborated by the tradition that Bimbisāra's father Bhattiya was defeated by Brahmadatta, king of Aṅga.

In any case, the reign of Bimbisāra marks the rise of Magadha as a great power, for he avenged his father's downfall by inflicting a crushing defeat upon his hated and hereditary rival, and annexed the State of Aṅga to Magadha. According to Jaina sources, Aṅga became a province of Magadha, and was ruled by its crown prince, with Champā as its capital.

The complete extinction of this old State reflects great credit upon Bimbisāra, whose decisive victory must have been due as much to his military genius as to his extensive military preparations. It would not be too much to conjecture that it was chiefly with a desire to devoting his exclusive attention to this campaign that he entered into marriage alliances with powerful neighbours like the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī and the ruler of Kosala and fostered friendly relations with other neighbouring powers. He married Kosaladevī, a sister of Prasenajit, king of Kosala, who brought him as her dowry a village in Kāsi. He also married Chellana, daughter of the Lichchhavi chief Chetaka and mention is made of yet another wife, Vaidehi Vasavi; but she is probably to be identified with Chellana. When the king of Avanti was attacked by jaundice, Bimbisāra sent him his famous physician Jivaka. Thus he conciliated two powerful neighbouring states as well as a third which was a potential enemy. But his political vision roamed towards still wider horizons. He married Kṣema, a daughter of the king of Madra (Central Punjab) and maintained diplomatic relations with Paushkarasarin (Pukkusati), king of Gāndhāra, with

his capital at Taxila (near Rawalpindi), who was engaged in hostilities with the ruler of Avanti. Partly by his conquest of Aṅga, and partly by his marriage and diplomacy, Bimbisāra raised the power and prestige of Magadha very high. According to a Buddhist canonical text, the kingdom of Bimbisāra extended to 300 leagues and contained 80,000 villages. Although these numbers are more or less stock phrases, and so should not be taken literally, they give a general idea of the power and prosperity of the kingdom of Magadha.

Bimbisāra looms large both in Buddhist and Jaina texts, and both faiths claim him as their follower. The truth probably is that, true to Indian tradition, the king showed respect and reverence for both Gautama Buddha and Mahāvīra who had made Magadha the centre of their religious activities and were closely associated with the capital city Rājgṛiha. Bimbisāra made a gift to Buddha of Venuvana (Bamboo-garden) near the city and he spent many days in that famous retreat. Rājgṛiha is even now an important place of pilgrimage to the Jainas as well as to Buddhists.

Bimbisāra had several sons, of whom Ajātaśatru, son of his Lichchhavi wife Chellana, and governor of Aṅga, was the eldest. According to Buddhist accounts, though he was the heir-designate he did not wait for his father's death, but killed him for the sake of the throne. According to the Jaina tradition, Ajātaśatru imprisoned his father and seized the throne, but because of some misunderstanding of his son's actions, Bimbisāra took poison and died.

II. AJĀTAŚATRU

Whatever may be the exact details, there is no reason to doubt that Ajātaśatru was instrumental in putting Bimbisāra to death; but although he had seized the throne by a foul crime he showed prowess and ability of a very high order in the administration of his country. He engaged in hostilities with all the three powers whom his father had conciliated, in order to keep his hands free for the thorough subjugation of Aṅga, and once that this task was achieved he turned his attention to his northern and western neighbours. We learn from Buddhist texts that he fortified his capital from fear of an invasion by Pradyota, king of Avanti. Whether such an invasion actually took place we do not know, but we possess a detailed account of his wars with the Kosalas and Lichchhavis.

According to the tradition preserved in Buddhist texts, the murder of Bimbisāra was soon followed by the death of his queen Kosaladevī,

who died of grief at the death of her husband. As she was the princess of Kosala and had received the Kāsi village as her dowry, her brother Prasenajit, king of Kosala, felt sorely aggrieved at the conduct of Ajātaśatru, and reoccupied the village. This brought about the war which lasted a long time with alternate success and failure on both sides. Once Ajātaśatru was taken prisoner, Prasenajit appears to have concluded peace by marrying his daughter to him and giving her the disputed village of Kāsi by way of dowry. Although corroborative details are lacking, we may regard the result of the war as a triumph for Ajātaśatru. In any case, Kosala ceased henceforth to be a great power and the fortunes of Magadha were clearly in the ascendant.

The war with the Lichchhavis was of more momentous consequence and both Buddhist and Jaina texts refer to it in some detail. They say that on his accession to the throne, Ajātaśatru had asked his two younger brothers, Halla and Vehalla, to return the mighty elephant and jewellery which had been presented to them by their father; that Bimbisāra fled with them to their grandfather Chetaka of Vaiśālī and that as the latter refused Ajātaśatru's request to extradite fugitive princes, his dominions were invaded by his eldest grandson. According to another account, the war was caused by a breach of trust on the part of the Lichchhavis in respect of a mine of precious stones (or some fragrant substance) near a port on the Gangā, over which the two powers exercised joint authority.

Both sides made great preparations for the coming war. Ajātaśatru constructed a fort on the Gangā near a village called Pāṭali, which was to become the nucleus of the future city of Pāṭaliputra. The site was admirably chosen as a measure of defence against the attacks of the Lichchhavis, who dominated the opposite bank. Ajātaśatru also sought the advice of Gautama Buddha, who was firm in his expression of the view that so long as the Lichchhavis remained united and true to their democratic constitution, Ajātaśatru would not be able to overcome them. Taking this hint, Ajātaśatru sent his minister Vassakara and a group of spies to the Lichchhavi country, and they proceeded to sow seeds of dissension among the principal leaders and thus thoroughly undermined its strength.

The Lichchhavis did not underrate the great danger that threatened them. According to a Jaina canonical text, Chetaka called together the eighteen Ganarājās of Kāsi and Kosala, nine Lichchhavis, and nine Mallakis, and discussed the question whether they should accept the demands of Ajātaśatru or go to war with him. Although details

are lacking, it is legitimate to infer that Chetaka succeeded in organizing a big confederacy of republican clans in north Bihar and the neighbouring regions in the west, in order to check the aggressive imperialism of Magadha. The war must have been a protracted one, for we know from Jaina texts that the great confederacy existed for at least sixteen years. The texts also give some details of military operations, from which it appears that the success of Ajātaśatru was due at least in part, to new weapons of destruction which he used for the first time in this war, and which were apparently unknown to his enemies.

The war, which must have begun before 484 B.C. and have continued till after 468 B.C., ended in a complete triumph for Ajātaśatru. Thus did he lay the foundations of that Magadhan empire which was destined gradually to absorb almost the whole of India.

The Lichchhavis did not, however, cease to exist for they are heard of again after many centuries in connexion with Chandragupta I, the founder of the Imperial Guptas, and we also know of a Lichchhavi family which ruled for hundreds of years even before that time in the Nepal valley. The fact that the Vrijjis and Lichchhavis are included in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* as being among the 'Rajaśabdopajivī Saṅghas', may indicate that the non-monarchical gana (republican) confederacy was revived some time after the death of Ajātaśatru. But this is at best a hypothesis for which no definite evidence can be cited at present. Besides, it is very difficult to believe that the Vrijjis or Lichchhavis could have maintained an independent existence during the supremacy of the Nandas or the Mauryas.

According to a Tibetan tradition preserved in the late chronicle *Pag-sam-jon-zang*, the earliest king of Tibet, who is believed to have come from a foreign country and to have begun his rule some time between the fourth and first century B.C., belonged to the Li-tsa race, which may easily be taken as being a modified form of Lichchhavi. It is not unlikely that after the loss of their power in the fifth century B.C., one group of Lichchhavis migrated to Nepal and another to Tibet. Meanwhile the authenticity of the Tibetan tradition remains to be proved.

To return to Ajātaśatru, he, like his father, showed reverence for Gautama Buddha and Mahāvīra, both of whom died during his reign and it was he who gave full facilities for the holding of the First General Council of the Buddhists in the Saptaparni cave at Rājgṛiha shortly after Buddha's death.

III. THE SUCCESSORS OF AJĀTAŚATRU

The successors of Ajātaśatru are shadowy figures. The Buddhist tradition, as preserved in *Mahāvaṁsa,* names the next four kings as Udayabhadra, Anuruddha, Munda and Nāgadāsaka. According to the Purāṇas, the four successors of Ajātaśatru were Darśaka, Udayi, Nandivardhana, and Mahānandi. Although the name of Darsaka is omitted in the *Mahāvaṁsa,* he figures prominently as a ruler of Magadha in the drama, '*Svapnavāsavadattā*' of Bhāsa. The next king, Udāyi, is identical with the Udayabhadra of the other list. The Jaina texts, like the Buddhist, represent him as a son of Ajātaśatru, and do not regard him as a parricide, but as having been devoted to his father. According to them he was governor of Champā, but after his father's death was called to the throne by an assembly of the dignitaries of the realm. The one definite thing we know about him is that he founded a new capital city on the Gangā which came to be called Pāṭaliputra and Kusumapura. Evidently he built the city in the neighbourhood of the fort erected by Ajātaśatru at Pāṭaligrāma. According to the Jaina account, he was killed by an assassin who had been engaged by Palaka, king of Avanti. This Palaka was the son of Pradyota, for fear of whose invasion Ajātaśatru had strengthened the fortifications of his capital city, so that the assassination was the result of political rivalry between the two states. According to other accounts, Avanti had meanwhile annexed the neighbouring kingdom of the Vatsas, the capital of which was Kauśāmbī. Its boundaries must therefore almost have touched those of Magadha which makes the hostility between the two easy to explain.

Nothing is known about the three successors of Udayabhadra mentioned in the *Mahāvaṁsa,* though the existence of Munda is vouched for in a Buddhist canonical text by a stray reference to king Munda of Pāṭaliputra. Nor are we better informed about the two successors of Udāyi in the Paurāṇic list.

According to the *Mahāvaṁsa,* as Udayabhadra and his three successors were all parricides, the citizens were so disgusted that they drove the family away and raised an *āmatya* (minister) named Śiśunāga, to the throne. He is undoubtedly to be identified with the Śiśunāga of the Purāṇas, who is said to have left his son at Vārānasi and ascended the throne at Rājgṛiha. He was therefore probably a governor of Vārānasi, or Kāsi, which had formed a part of the Magadha empire since the days of Ajātaśatru. The destruction of the Pradyotas of Avanti, with which he is credited in the Purāṇas, must be regarded as his greatest

achievement, for by it the age-long rivalry was settled in favour of Magadha, thus establishing its authority over all the important kingdoms and republican States that flourished at the time of Gautama Buddha. We possess various legends about Śiśunāga. According to one of these, his mother was a courtesan of Vaiśālī and hence he re-established the city and fixed his royal residence there.

The successor of Śiśunāga is named Kākavarṇa in the Purāṇas and Kālāśoka in the *Mahāvaṁsa*, and we may easily identify the two. It was during his reign that the second Great Buddhist Council was held at Vaiśālī just one hundred years after the death of Buddha. According to some accounts it was he who finally transferred the capital to Pāṭaliputra. According to the Ceylonese chronicles, he was assassinated in the neighbourhood of this city, and was succeeded by his ten sons who ruled simultaneously. One of these is called Nandivardhana, a name that occurs in the Paurāṇic list as the last king but one of the Śaiśunāga family. The two may be one and the same person, but we know nothing of him or his successor Mahānandi (according to the Purāṇas) nor of the ten sons of Kālāśoka, except what may be gleaned from the history of the Nandas, who supplanted this family and ruled over the kingdom of Magadha.

IV. THE NANDAS

The origin of the Nandas is buried in obscurity, though all our authorities agree that Mahāpadma Nanda, the founder of the family, was of disreputable origin. But while the Purāṇas describe him as the son of Mahānandi by a Śūdra woman, a Jaina text represents him as the son of a courtesan by a barber. The Greeks who accompanied Alexander have left a more circumstantial account. According to Curtius, the founder of the Nanda dynasty was a barber who became a paramour of the queen, and who through her influence gained the confidence of the reigning monarch and treacherously murdered him. Then, under the pretext of acting as guardian to the royal children, he usurped supreme authority and put the princes to death. As this is the earliest account that we possess, and as it was based on information collected within less than half a century of the events it describes, we may regard it as more reliable than the others, particularly as it is in agreement with the Jaina version. It also fits in with the tragic story of Kālāśoka to which reference has been made, and the murdered princes were probably his ten sons. But however low the birth of Mahāpadma Nanda may have been, he must be

regarded as having been a very able man. Though the Purāṇas refer to his reign as ushering in the Śūdra epoch, they describe him as the destroyer of all Kshatriyas and sole ruler of the Earth. In other words, they imply that he uprooted the various Kshatriya ruling families, such as the Aikshvakus, Pānchālas, Kāsis, Haihayas, Kaliṅgas, Aśmakas, Kurus, Maithilas, Surasenas and Vitihotras, who were ruling in different parts of Northern India. That all this is not mere hyperbole, is proved beyond doubt by the statement of the Greek writers that practically the whole of North India to the east of the Punjab formed a powerful empire with its capital at Pāṭaliputra. An inscription of king Khāravela, engraved two or three centuries later and found near Bhuvaneshwar, refers to the Nandas as ruling over Kaliṅga, while according to several Mysore inscriptions of the twelfth century A.D., even Mysore and the southern part of Bombay State formed part of the dominions of the Nandas. Whatever we may think of this last statement, there can be no doubt that the Nandas had established their sway over a very large area, which included the greater part of North India to the east of the Punjab and Rajputana, and also a part of the Deccan. Thus in the course of less than two hundred years, the petty State of Magadha rose to be the greatest empire that India had known till then.

Mahāpadma Nanda, who rose to be the founder of such a vast empire, must have been a man of wonderful ability. Unfortunately, Indian tradition is silent about the career and personality of this great genius. There is also a great diversity of views among the Purāṇas as to the history of this illustrious family. While one Purāṇa assigns to Mahāpadma a reign of eighty-eight years, another makes it only twenty-eight. The Purāṇas say that he had eight sons who ruled for a period of twelve years, but do not make it clear whether they ruled jointly or in succession, and give the name of only one of them. The Ceylonese chronicles assign a total period of only twenty-two years to nine Nandas. The *Mahābodhivaṁsa* calls the founder Ugrasena, instead of Mahāpadma, and gives the names of his eight sons, the last of whom was Dhana. This Dhana Nanda was on the throne of Magadha when Alexander invaded India and the Greek writers call him Agrammes (or Xandrames) which may be a Greek form of Augraseniya, son of Ugrasena. The Macedonian hero Alexander the Great, after conquering western Asia, overran Afghanistan and the Punjab, and in 326 B.C. advanced as far as the Beas river. He did not proceed further. According to Greek accounts, he was anxious to

cross the river but his soldiers refused to follow him. Whether it was merely due to the desire of the soldiers to return home or, as is alleged by at least one Greek writer, to the fear inspired by the mighty Nandas, whose empire lay beyond, cannot be determined with certainty; but we know that Alexander had collected reliable information about the strength of the enemy, for it is described in detail in the classical accounts of his expedition.

The Greek writers refer to the Prasii and Gangaridae as the two peoples who exercised sway over this vast realm. The term Gangaridae must have been derived from the river Gangā and might originally have denoted the people living along the lower course of the Gangā. The Prasii is probably derived from some such word as 'prāchya' (eastern). But classical writers often refer to the two as one nation having only one king; and what is still more singular is that they call the united people simply Gangaridae. The only reasonable inference seems to be that at about the time of Alexander's invasion, the Gangaridae were a very powerful nation, and either formed a dual monarchy with the Prasii or were otherwise closely associated with them on equal terms in a common cause against the foreign invader. In any case it was reported to Alexander that the kings of the Gangaridae and Prasii were waiting for him with an army of 80,000 horse, 200,000 foot, 8,000 war chariots and 6,000 fighting elephants. This gives us an idea of the strength and resources of the mighty Nandas, and how striking must have been their contrast with those of the petty States and republican clans which had hitherto been alone in offering resistance to the Macedonian invader.

According to the classical accounts, the Indian ruler who possessed these resources exercised sway over a vast stretch of territory from the Beas to the Gangā river, and perhaps even further to the east. He was undoubtedly a son of Mahāpadma Nanda, and was most probably Dhana Nanda, the youngest. After referring to the usurpation of the throne by the barber, the Greek writers say that he begat the present king who was hated and despised by his subjects for the wickedness of his disposition and the meanness of his origin. This is partly corroborated by other literary evidence, which depicts him as fond of wealth which had been accumulated by means of excessive taxes and exactions. It is said that he was called Dhana Nanda because of his habit of hoarding wealth (dhana) and even a Tamil poem refers to the wealth of the Nandas which was 'hid in the bed of the river Gangā'. Evidently this miserliness and avarice, which led to heavy exactions,

made the last Nanda king unpopular with his subjects and paved the way for his destruction at the hands of Chandragupta Maurya, as will be related in another chapter.

THE SYSTEM OF MONARCHICAL ADMINISTRATION

We possess very little definite information about the system of administration in Bihar during the period under review so far as the monarchical states were concerned. It may readily be supposed that the general pattern of administration was not materially different from that which prevailed in other states in those days and of which we get a very broad outline in Sutra compositions and contemporary literature. The king was the theoretical head of the State in all its departments, executive, judicial and military, but he was helped by ministers, judges and assessors, and generals. As in later days, the ministers were frequently hereditary and the judges were mostly recruited from among learned Brāhmaṇas. The Buddhist canonical texts throw some light on the administrative system of Bimbisāra. He exercised a rigid control over high officials, called Mahāmātra, who were graded into several classes and assigned to the three departments mentioned above. Rough and ready justice was meted out to criminals and, in addition to imprisonment, the guilty were punished in various other ways, such as by whipping, branding, the tearing out of the tongue, the breaking of ribs, and beheading.

The system of appointing governors or Viceroys is first heard of in connexion with Aṅga, and there is no doubt that the system was followed in the case of the other territories which were conquered and annexed to the Magadha empire. There is also a reference to Mandalika Rājās, who were probably feudatory chieftains.

There is no evidence of there having been any popular assembly such as the Sabhā and Samiti of the Vedic age which exercised so great a degree of control over the king. But the idea did not altogether die out, and we hear of an assembly of the headmen of villages, 80,000 in number. Unfortunately there are no details of its nature and function.

VI. THE LICHCHHAVIS AND REPUBLICAN ADMINISTRATION

At about the time when Gautama Buddha flourished we find a powerful confederacy of non-monarchical clans ruling in North Bihar. This is referred to in the Buddhist Pali canon as the Vajjis, the Pali form of Sanskrit Vrijjis. The most important constituent

clan of this confederacy was the Lichchhavis, whose capital was Vaiśālī, an old town mentioned in the Paurāṇic and Epic legends which has been identified with Basarh in the Muzaffarpur district. Curiously enough, the Vajjis are sometimes referred to as synonymous with the Lichchhavis. It seems, however, that the two were different, but that, together with six other clans, they formed a close confederacy which was called Vajji from the name of this constituent clan. The Vajjis were also associated with Vaiśālī, which was not only the capital of the Lichchhavis, but the metropolis of the confederacy.

Numerous references in Buddhist and Jaina canonical literature give us a clear idea of this great and powerful confederacy, which was respected all over northern India and was connected by matrimonial alliances with a large number of ruling families. That the Lichchhavis, or rather Vajji, took the place of the old Videhas is clearly demonstrated by the reference to their girls as Vaidehi, and the express reference to them as Kshatriyas. The theories that they were of Persian or Tibetan origin, or that they formed a branch of the Turkish Yue-chis, hardly deserve any serious consideration.

We can form a fair idea of the constitution of the Lichchhavis. There was no hereditary king, but the supreme political authority was vested in an assembly which consisted of a large number of men, both young and old. This met frequently and sometimes there were acrimonious disputes and prolonged and full discussions over controversial matters. We also hear of the great personal dignity enjoyed by the members of the asssembly, and of the election of members for the carrying out of specific duties on emergent occasions. It appears that every member of the assembly was called Raja. There are good grounds for believing that a chief of the clan was elected, for a term of years, and that he was assisted by an Executive Council, probably of nine members. It is obvious that the day-to-day administration was carried on by this body under the supreme authority of the assembly which met quite often to settle questions of general policy.

According to Jataka stories, which are of much later date than the Pali canon, the Lichchhavi assembly consisted of 7,707 Rajas or members, each of whom had to undergo a ceremonial consecration after a bath in a tank specially reserved for the purpose. Each of these Rajas had his own Uparaja (Viceroy), general, and treasurer. This gives rise to the presumption that the whole territory was divided into a number of small administrative units, the heads of which,

called Rajas, formed the supreme assembly at the centre. Whether these units were formed by small branches or sections of the clan, or were territorial in character, cannot be ascertained. It is therefore impossible to say whether the constitution was democratic within an oligarchy or democratic in the generally accepted sense of these terms.

The great Buddha expressed very high admiration for the constitution of the Lichchhavi Saṅgha (organization), and it is evident that he took it for the model of the constitution of his own religious Saṅgha. Fortunately a detailed account of it is preserved in the Pali canon. It provided, among other things, definite rules regarding the method of moving resolutions, voting by ballot, decision by a majority of votes, the reference of complicated questions to committees, rules about quorum, votes of absentees and so on. All this suggests a surprisingly modern type of democratic procedure, and it was prevalent not only among the Lichchhavis, but also the other clans or social groups of ancient India who were generally known as Saṅghas or Ganas.

The judicial procedure followed by the Lichchhavis in criminal cases was also highly democratic. There were successive tribunals, each of which could release an accused person if it found him innocent, but which had to refer the case to the next higher authority if it found him guilty. The fourth tribunal, called Atthakulaka probably consisted of judges representing the eight kulas or clans of the confederacy. The next three tribunals were composed respectively of the Senāpati, Uparaja, and Raja. The last-named, being the final authority, could release the accused if he was proved innocent; but if he were found guilty, sentence was inflicted in accordance with the *Pavenipotthakā*, a book which recorded the law and precedents, and prescribed appropriate punishments for each offence.

Regarding this period of Bihar's history, we are obliged to begin with hazy legends. But soon enough, with the accession of Bimbisāra in 545 B.C., we come to firm ground. From then we have a continuous history, during which, though there are long spells of uncertainty, the foundations of future greatness and achievement in politics and administration are firmly laid. In other fields, too, Mithilā and Magadha shine forth brilliantly in that dim and distant era of our past. An account of the varied activities of our ancients in religion, philosophy and other spheres will now follow.

V

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND CULTURE UP TO 325 B.C.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

WE have to reconstruct the cultural history of Bihar mainly with the help of stray observations that occur in the Vedic, Paurāṇic, Jain and Buddhist literature. There are hardly any contemporary monuments handed down to our times to help us in our task.

The real and abiding contact of Vedic and non-Vedic culture in this part of India took place mostly in eastern U.P. and Bihar and we can assume that the Aryans gradually progressed eastwards from the Punjab. Like all other conquerors, they first sought to destroy everything that was non-Aryan. The legends regarding the destruction of Khāṇḍavavana by Arjuna, the Sarpa-satra by his grandson Janamejaya, the expulsion from Mathurā of the serpent Kāliā by Kṛishṇa, all point to this conclusion. Gradually however, there arose a tendency towards co-existence and the amalgamation of cultures, as is indicated by the marriage of Bhīma and Arjuna with the Rākshasī Hiḍimbā and the Nāga princess Ulupi respectively.

We find interesting evidence of the mutual influence of the two cultures in eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The real synthesis seems to have taken place for the most part in Bihar, so that its early cultural history is of great importance.

A. RELIGION

The old and orthodox belief that Mithilā, constituting northern Bihar, is a holier region than Kārusha, Magadha and Aṅga, which form part of southern Bihar, is owing to the historic fact that northern Bihar was the first to be brought under the influence of Aryan culture.

The introduction of the Aryan religion and culture in northern Bihar was due to the missionary zeal of a band of workers under the leadership of a learned Brāhmaṇa from the Sarasvati valley in eastern Punjab, which was a well-known centre of Aryan religion and culture. The name of this leader was Māṭhava Videha whose story has already been told in the last chapter.

There were other Aryan sages associated with the spread of Vedic culture in Bihar. They belonged to the Aṅgīras and Bharadvāja Gotras. The priests of the Videha kings Karandhama and Marutta were Aṅgīrasas, so was Dīrghatamas, who introduced the Vedic religion in the Aṅga or Bhagalpur area. Uchathya, Bṛihaspati and Saṁvarta were other Brāhmaṇa sages connected with the spread of Aryan religion in Bihar.

The Paurāṇic tradition attributes the introduction of Vedic culture in southern Bihar (Aṅga and Magadha) to the sage Dīrghatamas, who was a scion of the Aṅgīras Gotra, to which the hereditary priests of the Aryan dynasty at Vaiśālī also belonged. Dīrghatamas went to the Aṅga country (the Bhagalpur area) and there married the queen's Śūdra nurse. He was also closely connected with king Balī, whose kingdom lay somewhere in southern Bihar. Dīrghatamas and his sons by the Śūdra wife later migrated to Girivraja or Rajgir and after long and severe austerities, the Śūdra-born sons of Dīrghatamas acquired Brāhmaṇhood.

These legendary Paurāṇic stories show that the Vedic missionaries in Bihar often contracted matrimonial relations with the indigenous population, as was the case later with the Hindu missionaries in Java, Sumatra and Kambodia. This was a step which must have gone far towards facilitating the spread of the Vedic religion and culture.

As a result of the efforts of these missionaries, the Vedic religion became well established at least among the advanced sections of the population and the rulers of the Videha and Vaiśālīan dynasties referred to in the Purāṇas were its patrons and followers. The Purāṇas record that the sacrifices of king Marutta, the son of Avikshita, were a model to others; his sacrificial vessels were all of gold and his honoraria to Brāhmaṇas were liberal. The Videha dynasty also followed the Vedic religion; some of its kings, such as Janaka, held sacrificial sessions where philosophical problems were discussed. The aristocratic sections of both the Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas subscribed to the Vedic religion. Buddhist evidence

shows that many among the Brāhmaṇa and Kshatriya landlords spent lavishly on the celebration of Vedic sacrifices, invoking Indra, Soma, Varuna, Prajāpati and other Vedic deities. Cows, bulls, steers, goats, sheep, pigs, and even elephants, were sacrificed in large numbers. The long sacrificial sessions had become something like the Samājas of Aśoka's days or the 'melās' (fairs) of modern times. The sacrifices of Brāhmaṇas such as Kuradanta and Uruvela Kāśyapa were eagerly looked for by the contemporary Bihari population, as occasions for convivial gatherings. Some of the Brāhmaṇas devoted their entire lives to Vedic studies and sacrifices, grew matted hair and lived in Agniśālās (houses for fire) built for the tending of the sacred fire. The three Kāśyapa brothers who lived near Gaya, and whom Buddha converted, belonged to this category.

According to Dharmaśāstra literature ordinary householders such as Sundarika Bharadvāja of the *Saṁyutta-Nikayā* kept Agnihotra (sacrificial fire) in their houses. Sacrifices were offered on new and full moon days and on the 8th day of each fortnight. The usual family saṅskāras such as Jātakarma, Upanayana and Vivāha, were widely prevalent; as was also the ancestor worship typified in Śrāddha ritual. King Viśāla of the Vaiśālī dynasty is stated to have offered oblations to his manes (pitris) at Gaya.

Let us now try to visualize the main features of the non-Vedic religion which was prevalent in Bihar before the advent of the Vedic cult. The Karusha country, consisting of the Shahabad district, Magadha, corresponding to the Patna and Gaya districts and Aṅga, consisting of the Bhagalpur and Monghyr districts, were for a long time the centres of pre-Vedic religion. Karusha is represented as the abode of Tāṭikā, and the kingdom of Bālī was not far away to its east. King Bārhadratha Jarāsandha is represented as an Asura or demon. Gaya was the centre of the Asura culture before the expulsion from it of the demon Gayāsura by Vishṇu. There are a number of sites in the Hazaribagh and Ranchi districts which, even to-day, are popularly regarded as Asura sites. The relics of the non-Vedic religion and culture are relatively few in northern Bihar. The Gajendramoksha legend, associated with the Hariharanātha temple at Sonpur, suggests that the place may once have been inhabited by the enemies of Vishṇu worshippers. If we go a little to the west of Bihar, we find that Vārānasi itself was for long the centre of the non-Vedic religion. Its principal deity, Mahādeva, was only admitted into the Aryan pantheon after a great lapse of time. His followers are

represented in the Daksha-Yajna legend as destroyers of Vedic sacrifice, which was being performed by his father-in-law Daksha. At one place (v. 22.14) in the *Atharvaveda* 'fever' is asked to visit the people of Kāśī, Aṅga and Magadha, and later Dharmaśāstra literature prescribes a penance for the sin of visiting eastern countries such as Aṅga, Vaṅga and Magadha, except by way of pilgrimage.

It would thus appear that southern Bihar was the centre of non-Aryan worship and culture far longer than was the case with northern Bihar. The precise features of the pre-Vedic religion are difficult to determine. Mahādeva, the god at Vārānasi, was certainly one of its prominent deities. King Jarāsandha is also represented by the *Mahābhārata* as a Śiva-worshipper and the presence of the bow of Śiva in the Mithilā palace from the time of king Devavrata to that of Janaka is not quite accidental. It suggests that once upon a time Janaka's ancestors were Śiva-worshippers or had accepted Śiva worship which was current in the pre-Vedic religion.

Another distinctive feature of the non-Vedic religion was Nāga (serpent) worship. The Nāgas, who are represented as being exterminated or driven out by Arjuna, Janamejaya and Kṛishṇa from the Delhi-Mathurā area, were obviously non-Aryans, and were the worshippers of serpents. When expelled from Uttar Pradesh, they naturally moved to Bihar in large numbers. King Marutta of the Vaiśālī dynasty is represented as having taken action against the Nāgas, because they disturbed Vedic sacrifices. This legend obviously refers to a struggle between the new Aryan settlers and the old inhabitants who were devoted to serpent-worship.

We get several references to the worship of the Nāgas during this period. Rajgir (Rājagṛiha), the capital of Magadha, was a great centre of Nāga worship. There is no doubt the temple of Mani-nāga, which has been excavated there, belongs to the Gupta period, but a former version of it existed in early times; Kṛishṇa draws the attention of Arjuna and Bhīma to it from the top of the Barabar (Gorathagiri) hills. But Mani-nāga was not the only Nāga worshipped by the citizens of Rajgir; Arbuda Sakravapi and Āstika were the names of other Nāga deities which shared the homage of the people of Magadha. In Gaya, Nāgas were highly honoured; there was one Nāga in the temple of Uruvela Kasyapa whom he had lodged in the sanctum of his Agniśālā, but who was overpowered by Buddha by means of his supernatural powers. The Nāgas play an important part in Buddhist legends; Muchalinda Nāga protected Buddha from the heat of the

summer sun for a whole week while he was absorbed in continuous meditation. Nāgas were regarded as benevolent deities by the Magadha people; the popularity of Nāga worship in Rajgir was due to the conviction that rains would never fail if the Nāgas were properly propitiated.

The *Ṛigveda* has a hymn in praise of the Araṇyani or forest, but it does not refer to the worship of any individual tree such as Aśwathha or Vaṭa. Tree-worship was very common in the pre-Vedic religion of Bihar. It was believed that various trees were haunted by divinities or by departed spirits which often came to the help of devotees. In the sculptures at Bhārhut, there is a scene where a tree-spirit is offering a dish full of valuable presents to devotees. The great honour which Buddhists give to the Pippala or fig tree is no doubt due to Buddha having attained enlightenment under it; but Buddha probably chose that tree for his meditation because he shared the popular belief that that tree or its presiding deity helped spiritual efforts. Buddha felt very grateful to the Bodhi tree after his enlightenment; he spent one week in gazing at it continuously without blinking his eyes. The Buddhist and Jaina legends which developed in Bihar associate a separate tree with earlier Buddhas and Tīrthaṅkaras, obviously because tree-worship was very common in pre-Vedic Bihar. Tree-worship was quite common among the Negritoes who resided in the southern hilly tracts of Bihar, and it was associated with the Chaityas in Magadha and Mithilā.

Chaitya worship was another important feature of the pre-Vedic religion of Bihar. In later times, the Chaitya was differentiated from a Vihāra or monastery and indicated the temple containing the Buddha image. It was no doubt a place of worship in an earlier period but the object worshipped there will have usually been funeral remains enshrined in a Stūpa. Chaityas are distinguished from Devāyatanas or temples in the Epics, as the former were usually associated with funeral remains. Rāvaṇa, when wooing Sītā, is compared to a Chaitya in a funeral ground. The Chaityas were generally away from the town or village, and could be reached by passing along lonely roads or crossing rivers and streams.

People prayed to the Chaityas for the fulfilment of their desires and offered them a worship which often included animal sacrifices, especially when there was a response to their prayers. There was a high Chaitya outside Rajgir which was venerated by the Magadhas. This contained the remains of a Daitya or demon who had been

killed by king Bṛihadratha. The people of Rajgir worshipped it with devotion and decorated it with garlands. Bhīma and Arjuna destroyed this Chaitya in order to demonstrate their hostile intentions to the Magadha emperor. The Chaitya at Rajgir was located in a high building, the precise nature of which is not known.

What was the object of worship in a Chaitya? It was probably a Stūpa or funeral mound of a Yaksha or demon, who was believed to fulfil the desires of devotees. This Stūpa was probably surrounded by a railing. Sometimes, however, it was merely a rock, with an image carved on it. Such was the case with the Pashenaki Chaitya near Rajgir. Very often the object of worship was a tree, usually believed to be the abode of a spirit. Udenaka and Sattamraka Chaityas, which were among those worshipped by the Lichchhavis, were Vṛiksha or tree-Chaityas; the tree in the Gotamaka Chaitya was a Nyagrodha or Vata and those in the Sattamraka Chaitya, a grove of seven mangoes. The Chaitya tree was often surrounded by a railing or pavilion. The structure raised around the Bodhi tree by Aśoka as shown in its representation in Bhārhut sculpture is evidence of this. Chaitya worship was very common and deep-rooted both in south and north Bihar. The towns and villages of the Lichchhavis were full of Chaityas and Buddha was anxious that the Lichchhavis should not give up Chaitya worship even after conversion.

Another important feature of the pre-Vedic religion of Bihar was the worship of Yakshas. The Yakshas are regarded nowadays as semi-divine beings and followers or servants of Kubera, the god of wealth. They have, however, a long and interesting history behind them which cannot be fully discussed here. During the period under review, Yakshas were popular spirits who were both benevolent and the reverse. Tāṭikā of Shahabad, the daughter of Mātryaksha Suketu in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, is described as a Yakshī. The epic calls her a Yakshiṇī, even when she had become a man-eater. Buddha is represented as converting a number of Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs to the good life. He rebuked the Yakshiṇī or guardian deity of Mathurā for appearing stark naked before him and he converted 35,000 Yakshas near that town. The Buddhist goddess Hariti was a child-devouring Yakshiṇī at Rajgir, but Buddha converted her to the good life and she became a lover of children. The Jātakas are also in the habit of refering to Yakshas as cruel cannibals, whose eyes did not wink and who cast no shadows. It was believed that disconsolate persons became Yakshas or evil spirits and that after death they troubled their

former enemies. It was the popular belief that this malevolent variety of Yakshas could be transformed into the benevolent variety either by propitiating them properly or by converting them; but the latter course was only possible for great men like Buddha.

The worship of benevolent Yakshas was very popular both in north and south Bihar at the time of the rise of Buddhism. Yaksha was also a title of honour. Buddha and Indra are both called Yakshas in Buddhist literature. The *Atharvaveda* (X. 2.28-33) identifies Yaksha with Brahmā dwelling in the human body. Yakshas helped people in a variety of ways; they could give sons to barren women, stop the spread of epidemics such as smallpox, contrive to announce the advent of the enemy, and they were often of use to the finance department of the day because they could help in detecting tax-evaders. The horse-shaped Yaksha Selaga helped town-dwellers in distress and women could get sons by offering him worship. The Manibhadra Yaksha of Samilla arrested the spread of smallpox which led the grateful citizens to besmear his temple with cowdung on the eighth and fifteenth day of every fortnight. The door-keeper of Vaiśālī became a Yaksha after his death and, having told his son in a dream to build him a temple (Yaksha-sthāna) and to keep a bell there, he promised to ring it when an enemy was seen approaching the city. Of course the city-daroga availed himself of the offer and ensured the safety of the capital. This Yaksha was called a Ghaṇṭika Yaksha. The customs officers of both Rajgir and Champā became Yakshas after their death and asked their sons to build a Yaksha-sthāna for themselves with a bell in it and promised to ring it as soon as anybody tried to avoid octroi duties. The Yaksha Umbaradatta was devoutly worshipped by barren women who wished for a son, as was also the Yaksha Surambara. A hundred buffaloes were offered to the latter if the wish was granted.

As Yakshas were associated with spirits, their shrines were usually built at a distance from the town or village, on a hill, near a tank or river-ghat or in a desert or forest; but sometimes they were near the city gate or in the palace itself. Jaina literature has preserved a good account of the Yaksha-sthāna near Champā. This was a famous shrine of great antiquity which was decorated with umbrellas, bells and banners. There was no Yaksha image in it but in the centre was a dais coated with cowdung which bore the impression of the palm dipped in red and yellow. Yakshas were very fond of flowers and scents, so that this temple was strewn with sweet-smelling flowers

of different colours, and fragrant incense was kept burning there. The temple was situated in a clearing in a forest outside Champā and there was a big tree in its centre with a dais or slab under it. It was a substantial building provided with doors and an enclosing wall.

Yaksha worship was very popular in Bihar among the common people, and the *Aupapatika-Sūtra* describes the Puranabhadra temple as being full of jesters, dancers, acrobats, story-tellers and reciters of ballads. To judge from the evidence of sculptures of a slightly later period, these temples often had barrel-shaped domes surrounded by a railing.

Buddhist literature shows that the people of Gaya worshipped Suchiloma Yaksha, while those of Rājgṛiha inclined to Indrakuta and Manimālā Yakshas and those of Pāṭaliputra, to Ajakalapaka Yaksha. Yaksha images became common in the Śuṅga period, but in the age of Buddha and Mahāvīra the temples contained no images, but merely small platforms which were usually beneath a tree which was believed to be the haunt of the Yaksha.

The round black pebbles of a particular type found in the Gaṇḍak river are worshipped as Śāligrāmas and there is a place called Śāligrāma in its upper valley. Stone-worship is not known to Vedic culture in any form and the Gaṇḍak was on the extreme outskirts of Aryan settlements. It is, therefore, very likely that the original inhabitants of northern Bihar were worshippers of the stones known as Śāligrāma.

To conclude, the religion of the pre-Vedic inhabitants of Bihar consisted of the worship of sacred trees, funeral mounds, Yakshas, Chaityas and Nāgas and sacred stones. The worship of funeral mounds presupposes ancestor worship also. As the gradual amalgamation and synthesis of Vedic and non-Aryan religions proceeded apace, the Vedic cult of sacrifice and Brāhmaṇa leadership was accepted by the original inhabitants and most of their deities were accommodated in the Aryan pantheon. The Vedic Aryan tried to adopt Stūpa worship and a passage in the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* states that the funeral mounds of a Brāhmaṇa, a Kshatriya, a Vaiśya and a Śūdra were to be as high as the head, shoulders, thighs and knees respectively. Funeral mounds, however, did not become popular with the followers of the Vedic religion. It was Buddhism which whole-heartedly accepted the practice and started building Stūpas over the remains of Buddha and other distinguished monks. In Buddha's time, these

Stūpas were also erected over the remains of great kings, and later on the people began to build commemorative and votive Stūpas as well. The worship of sacred trees was accepted first in Buddhism and later in Hinduism and there is hardly a village in the India of to-day which is without a Pippala tree devoutly worshipped on occasion by its inhabitants. Chaitya worship was accepted by the Aryans. Sacrifice before a Chaitya, usually the abode of Saṅkara, Paśupati and Ārya—all non-Vedic deities—is prescribed in the *Aśvalāyana-Gṛihya-Sūtra* I, III. King Marutta of the Videha dynasty is represented as having built a large number of Chaityas in northern Bihar. Chaitya worship was later accepted in Buddhism also and it eventually gave rise to the Hindu temple-worship. The worship of Nāgas was enthusiastically accepted both by Buddhism and Hinduism. We have already referred to the help given by Nāga Muchalinda to Buddha, and *Gṛihya-Sūtra* literature shows how contemporary Hinduism was anxious to offer proper worship to Nāgas. Vishṇu was given a conch of Nāga. The worship of Yaksha became very common in Hinduism after *c.* 400 B.C.; they ceased to be malevolent spirits and were made demi-gods and members of the retinue of Kubera, the god of wealth, and we begin to come across their images from *c.* 200 B.C. Śāligrāma worship was taken over by Vaishṇavism and has become a common feature of that sect all over India.

The give and take between Vedic and pre-Vedic culture was no doubt going on all over India, but perhaps we get clear evidence as to its nature in early times more in Bihar than in most other regions. The Aryans were determined to aryanize the universe, 'Kṛiṇvanto Viśvamāryam'; but it is equally true that by broadening the spiritual basis they succeeded to a great extent in universalizing their own culture through absorption or accommodation of several elements from cultures with which they came in contact.

The Sarasvatī valley and the Kuru-Panchāla territory (South-Eastern Punjab, Delhi, Agra and Rohilkhand) were the centres of the Vedic religion during this period, and the Brāhmaṇas who came from that region to Mithilā and Magadha inspired natural reverence, and the former often entertained a feeling of superiority with regard to the latter, as being closer followers of the Vedic religion.

Mithilā, Magadha and Aṅga were not out-and-out followers of the Vedic religion they had adopted. Being recent converts, they were perhaps able to understand its limitations better than those who had

been steeped in it for a long time. It is no doubt true that grand and costly Vedic sacrifices were very often performed by various Kshatriya and Brāhmaṇa families both in south and north Bihar, but it is probable that the thinking section of the population realized the futility of Vedic animal sacrifice earlier and on a wider scale in Bihar than elsewhere. This seems to be the reason why most of the protestant movements of ancient India such as Jainism, Buddhism, and so on arose in Bihar. The protest against the Vedic Kāmya (aiming at desires) religion, which prescribed sacrifices without end seems to have been first lodged by the Vrātyas, who are referred to as early as the *Atharvaveda*, as 'easterners'. In the present book, the problem as to who were Vrātyas and what were their religious and philosophical tenets cannot be fully discussed; there is ample evidence that they were easterners, and that, like the Sannyāsins and Bhikshus of a later age, they wandered from place to place and led a celibate life. They seem to have advocated a life of retirement and contemplation, devoted to spiritual thinking instead of Vedic sacrifices. The Vrātya mode of life seems to have paved the way indeed for the later Śramaṇa, Sannyāsa, Bauddha and Jaina schools.

The Vedic religion held no brief for the school of renunciation, for the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* talks about it in sarcastic terms and prefers Gṛihasthāśrama to Sannyāsa. The *Mahābhārata* avers in one place that Sannyāsa is the refuge of those who have failed in life, and to say that it is Vedic is to expose one's ignorance about the Vedic religion. Nevertheless the protest against Vedic Kāmya-mārga was gathering volume and found its expression in several Upanishads. We cannot locate all the Upanishads composed in Bihar; but there can be no doubt that important chapters of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* Upanishad were either composed by or reflected the views of those protestant philosophers of north Bihar who congregated at the court of king Janaka of Mithilā. When, during the philosophical debates at that court, Kahola Kausitakeya narrates (*Bṛih. UP.*, III.5.1) how Brāhmaṇa and Kshatriya youths, urged by the desire to know the mystery of the soul, renounce the world and give up natural affection and the attraction of wife, son, property and worldly glory, he is obviously giving a faithful picture of the times, when scions of the nobility such as Buddha and Mahāvīra were cutting all their family ties in order to solve the mystery of the universe. The Upanishads show that this tendency was becoming prominent in orthodox circles also. Tradition has it that most of the kings of Mithilā entered

Sannyāsaāśrama in their old age in order to devote the remaining years of their lives to spiritual contemplation.

EARLY THINKERS OF BIHAR

Before dealing with heterodox schools, such as Jainism and others, we may deal briefly with a few important figures from Bihar who contributed to the development of the orthodox philosophy of the period under review.

From time immemorial, Bihar has been a land of philosophers and has been distinguished for its spiritual outloook. It is the birth-place of some of the greatest seers of India and of the world.

Because of conflicting traditions, the divergence of mythological accounts and lack of clear-cut historical data, it is difficult to say anything definite about the time and place of many ancient thinkers, who no longer belong to any particular locality, but to the whole of India. They have become objects of an indefinite past, in which the boundary lines of centuries have vanished. Besides, great thinkers are not the monopoly of the specific regions that produce them, for thought transcends geographical barriers and overflows zonal distinctions. In fact, every great thinker and his thought, whatever his land or language or time, are to-day the common heritage of humanity.

Nevertheless, it is possible to trace the characteristic genius or native traits of particular lands and their people who have a long cultural background. It is in this perspective that this subject has to be viewed. As the account presented here is meant for the general reader, controversial issues regarding names and dates have been avoided as far as possible.

The soil of Mithilā (in north Bihar) seems to have been congenial to the growth of philosophy, for it is here that many ancient Ṛishis radiated the light of spiritual wisdom. We can justly feel proud of the eminent trio, Janaka, Yājnavalkya and Gautama, whose praises are sung in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* and *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*.

The name of Janaka stands out as a symbol of Jīvanmukti, i.e. emancipation during life. This philosopher-king was called Videha (without a body), for he cared little for material things. Though living in the midst of royal luxuries, he was as completely unattached to them as is a lotus leaf which remains unaffected by water. Even the greatest earthly catastrophe could not disturb his mental equilibrium. His philosophic composure is illustrated by the well-known saying: Mithilāyām pradīptāyām na me dahyati kinchana. (Even if the

whole of Mithilā is in flames, no element of my real being (Self) is burnt thereby.)

Janaka was regarded as an emblem of perfect wisdom. Great sages like Śukadeva approached him for Brahmajnana or knowledge of the highest Reality. His fame attracted scholars from different parts of India and his immense popularity is testified to in the Upanishad (*Bṛihadāraṇyaka* II. I. ii): Janakah Janakah iti vai janah dhāvanti. (All people rush to him saying Janaka, Janaka).

The entire line of Janakas or Videhas was a race of philosophers. This is borne out by the *Devī Bhāgavata* which says, 'All the kings born in this family, known as the Janakas or Videhas, are reputed for their philosophic wisdom.'

Not the kings alone, but the general public of Mithilā of those times was spiritual-minded. This is evidenced by the *Śṛimadbhāgavata* which describes the philosophic life of Mithilā in the following lines:

Ete vai Maithilāh rājannātmavidyā visāradah.
Yogeśvara prasādena dvandvairmuktah gṛiheshvapi.

(O king! These Maithilās are adepts in the true knowledge of Self. Owing to the grace of the Lord of Yoga, they are true to the philosophical ideal of being beyond good and evil even in their homes).

The ideal envisaged was a synthesis of jnana (knowledge) with karma (action) and gārhasthya (household life) with sannyāsa (ascetic life). This in fact is the grand message of 'spirituality in action'.

Another illustrious name of the Upanishadic period is Yājnavalkya. He was a contemporary of Janaka and had metaphysical discourses with him on the nature of Brahman or the Absolute. Once king Janaka performed a sacrifice in which great scholars assembled from such distant lands as Kuru and Panchāla. The king offered a thousand cows to the wisest among them. This honour was won by Yājnavalkya, who satisfied all the questioners and succeeded in explaining the nature of ultimate Reality.

Even some ladies of this land have been great philosophers. In an assemblage of philosophers, Gārgī had a prolonged philosophical discussion with Yājnavalkya (*Bṛih.*, III. 6). Maitreyī, wife of Yājnavalkya had a long conversation on philosophy with her husband. The Upanishadic account of the intimate discourse between them (*Bṛih.*, II. 4) is highly interesting. The wife cared not for earthly riches, but for spiritual immortality (amṛitatva) and asked her husband to suggest means to that end. What use of material possessions, if they

do not lead me to immortal life, queried Maitreyī, who was a Brahmavādinī, a lady in quest of Reality. The message that was imparted to her by Yājnavalkya has become immortal in the history of thought: 'Ātmā va are drashtavyah, śrotavyah, mantavyah, nididhyasitavyah.' It is the Self for whose sake everything else in the world is dear to all (ātmanah kāmāya sarvam priyam); 'that Self ought to be seen, heard of, contemplated and realized.'

This emphasis on introspective self-analysis and detachment from worldly objects has been a prominent feature of Upanishadic philosophy.

In the Smṛiti known after his name, Yājnavalkya is referred to as a native of Mithilā (Mithilāsthah sa Yogīndrah). Some believe that he lived in a village, Kusuma, now in Nepal territory.

Another name which is equally glorious and time-honoured is that of Gautama. In the *Rigveda*, we find the name of Rahugana Gautama. The *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* refers to him as the priest of king Mādhava of Videha. It also speaks of him as a contemporary of Janaka and Yājnavalkya.

The *Skanda Purāṇa* gives the following information regarding the residence of Gautama:

'Āsīd Brahmapuri nāmnā Mithilāyām Virājita
Tasyam lasati dharmātmā Gautamo nāma tāpasah.'

i.e., Gautama lived in a village called Brahmapuri in Mithilā. The place of Gautama is still well known in Mithilā as Gautama-Sthāna (near Kamtaul Railway Station). It is about 28 miles north of Darbhanga town. There is also a sacred well there called Gautama Kuṇḍa. Nearby, there is Ahalyā-Sthāna which is named after his wife, Ahalyā. According to the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Śatānanda, son of Gautama, was the court-priest of king Janaka.

There is a popular legend that Gautama employed his dialectics to dissuade Rāma from going out on an exile into distant forests, and the latter, being caught between the horns of a dilemma, humorously accursed the Gautama-vidyā. This goes to show that the name of Gautama has been associated with Logic from very ancient times.

The *Nyāya Sūtra* (aphorisms of logic) of Gautama constitutes one of the foremost schools of logic in India. It forms an essential part of intellectual discipline. Hence it is said: 'Gautama-prathitam śāstram sarva-śāstropakarakam' i.e., the science (of logic) formulated by Gautama is helpful to all other sciences. Thus the importance of

Gautama in the history of early Indian thought cannot be overestimated.

The Rise and Spread of Jainism

Pārśva, the 23rd Tīrthaṅkara of the Jainas was a historic personage. He was the son of king Aśvasena of Vārānasi and renounced the kingdom and the world in pursuit of the spiritual ideal and founded the Nirgrantha order. Pārśva was not born in Bihar, but his sect had a large following in north and south Bihar in the time of Mahāvīra and Buddha, both of whom frequently refer to the Nirgranthas. The religion preached by Pārśva emphasized *kshamā* (forgiveness), *mārdava* (softness), *ārjava* (straightforwardness), *śaucha* (purity), *satya* (truth), *saṃyama* (self-control), *tapas* (austerity), *tyāga* (renunciation), *akiṇchaṇya* (poverty) and *brahmacharya* (celibacy). These constituted his tenfold Dharma (*daśavidha-dharma*). The Nirgranthas had to take the four vows of non-killing, truth, non-stealing and non-possession. The Nirgrantha Dharma of Pārśva thus bore a close resemblance to the renunciation school that was coming into prominence in Bihar by *c.* 800 B.C. Mahāvīra expanded the scope of the vow of non-possession by including *brahmacharya* and eschewing even the use of clothes as proof of complete renunciation. The renunciation school following the gospel of *tapas* (austerity) had therefore not only become popular but had carried its theories to extremes. Buddha was obliged to plead for reappraisal of the position and to advocate 'the middle path'. Such then was the religious background when Mahāvīra and Buddha enunciated their protestant views and philosophies.

There can be no doubt that Mahāvīra, the founder of present-day Jainism, was a son of Bihar. His native place was Kuṇḍapura, a suburb of Vaiśālī in the Muzaffarpur district. Most of his missionary activities were confined to Bihar and he finally attained Nirvāṇa at Pavapuri in the district of Patna.

There are a number of legends concerning the birth of Vardhamāna, known subsequently as Mahāvīra. The Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras, two sects of Jainas, do not agree on all the details of his life. We need not, however, enter into these controversial matters here. Suffice it to say that Mahāvīra was born in a Kshatriya family, Siddhārtha and Triśalā being his father and mother respectively. Siddhārtha's wife was a sister of Chetaka, another Kshatriya aristocrat of Vaiśālī. Tradition mentions that Chetaka had several

daughters, one of whom became a nun while the rest were married into the royal families of Magadha (Rajgir), Aṅga (Bhagalpur), Vatsa (Kauśāmbī), Avanti (Ujjain) and Sauvīra (northern Sindh). All these marriages may not be historical events, but they show that Mahāvīra was connected with several aristocratic and ruling families. His own family belonged to the Nirgrantha sect, founded by Pārśva.

We may assume that Mahāvīra received the usual education and training of a Kshatriya aristocrat in literature, philosophy, military and administrative matters, and music and the fine arts. He was, however, given to contemplation and in common with many aristocratic youths of the time, he began to entertain plans of renunciation. His parents tried to solve the problem by marrying him to a beautiful young woman named Yaśodā, who soon presented him with a daughter named Anojja, but the marriage only delayed the execution of his plan of renunciation. Mahāvīra did not want to hurt the feelings of his parents, and he waited till they were dead to renounce the world. The formal renunciation took place on the tenth day of the dark half of Mārgaśīrsha, when he was thirty years old.

Mahāvīra's austerities lasted for a little more than twelve years; they were thus twice as long as those of Buddha and very much more severe. During this period he wandered from place to place, wearing no clothes and allowing insects to live on his body. He thus presented so uncouth an appearance that he was regarded with disrespect and even ill-treated. Despite insults and blows, he had determined to follow his self-chosen path and for about eight years he was in close association with Gosāla, a well known ascetic of the school of Pārśvanātha. During these years of austerity, Mahāvīra visited a number of places, chief among which were Nālandā, Rājgṛiha, Champā, Vaiśālī and Śrāvastī. He attained supreme enlightenment at the age of forty-three, in the thirteenth year after his renunciation. The event took place on the tenth day of the bright fortnight in the month of Vaiśākha, under a Śāl tree in a field near the village Jṛimbhikagrāma, which is probably the modern Jambhigaon near the Damodar in Hazaribagh district.

In the sphere of religion, Jainism continued the old regulations of the order of Pārśva and, as already stated, added a fifth vow, that of *brahmacharya*. Mahāvīra started preaching soon after attaining enlightenment. His first converts were eleven Brāhmaṇas, who, at the sacrifice of Somila became his principal disciples and were known as Gaṇadharas. His career as a teacher started when he was

forty-three and continued until his death at the age of seventy. During this period as also during his *tapas*, he visited and re-visited several places in Bihar. Outside Bihar he visited Śrāvastī and Ujjain fairly frequently. Whether his journeys extended as far as the Sindh-Sauvīra country is somewhat doubtful.

Mahāvīra's close relationship with Bimbisāra, the king of Magadha, Dadhivāhana, the king of Champā and Śatanika, the king of Kauśāmbī, must have facilitated the spread of his gospel. On one occasion Bimbisāra is said to have issued a proclamation promising financial support to the relatives of those who enter the Jaina holy order. The Lichchhavis naturally had a soft corner in their hearts for the religion founded by a Vaiśālian. The Vārānasi people recognized that the new sect was a continuation of the one founded by a former prince of their own city. These circumstances went far to accelerate the spread of Jainism, and although the faith demanded a very high standard of life from its monks and nuns, it was an age which believed in renunciation. We can, therefore, well believe the Jaina tradition which claims that there were 14,000 monks and 36,000 nuns in the Church at the demise of Mahāvīra. Mahāvīra, unlike Buddha, had never shown any reluctance to the admission of women as nuns.

It may be pointed out that although Mahāvīra organized a Saṅgha, he did not allow monks to live together in monasteries, as did Buddha. Most of them were engaged in practising severe penances, either in the forest or in solitary places near towns and villages. As they wore no clothes, the nuns must have lived separately. The Church had prescribed that laymen and lay-women should give charity, not to a corporate Saṅgha, but to the individual monks and nuns of the new religion. The laity could, therefore, exercise a greater supervision over the character and life of the monks they were supporting than was possible in the case of Buddhism, where financial aid was given to a corporate monastery which controlled its own administration and was a law unto itself.

Buddhism had a special procedure for the admission of monks and nuns to Pravrajyā and Upasampadā, but none for the admission of laymen and lay-women. Anyone who visited a Buddha temple, listened to a sermon, or recited the well known triple formula of taking refuge in Buddha, Saṅgha, and Dharma, was counted as a lay supporter. Jainism, on the other hand, had laid down regular vows for the laity. They were to avoid the five faults or *atichāras*; they were to entertain no doubt whatsoever about the efficacy of Jainism or of

the Karma-siddhānta it advocated. They must have no desire to belong to another religion, or praise its founders and saints or mix with its followers. They were to follow the five vows laid down for the monks and nuns, but in a less exacting manner; thus, *brahmacharya* in their case meant merely conjugal fidelity. The five Anuvratas and four Śikshā-vratas which were laid down, required them to give liberally to the Church, to limit possessions and pleasures, to spend at least forty-eight minutes every day in prayer, to live as monks at least for one day in the month and to refrain from doing injury to others. The Jaina laity was thus more vitally connected with the Jaina Church and had a distinct group individuality which the Buddhist laity lacked. This enabled the Church to weather a number of storms and retain its separate existence.

The date of the death of Mahāvīra is a matter of controversy and is not yet definitely fixed. Even Jaina tradition itself is not unanimous about it. The most orthodox view is that it took place in 527 B.C. This is based upon a verse in the Digamabara work *Trilokasāra*, according to which the interval between the Nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra and the Śāka king was 605 years and five months. If we take this Śāka king as the founder of the Śāka era of A.D. 78, the event must be placed in 605 – 78, i.e., 527 B.C. There is, however, a tradition recorded by Hemachandra which puts the interval between the death of Mahāvīra and the accession of Chandragupta Maurya (*c.* 322 B.C.) as 155 years. This would place the event in 477 B.C. The synchronism of Bhadrabāhu with Chandragupta Maurya in *c.* 170 of the Vīra era, and of king Samprati with Suhastin in the year 245 of the same era, which is mentioned in Jaina works, tends to show that Mahāvīra died in *c.* 477 B.C., but this date must be put back by about ten years (487 B.C.), since Buddhist tradition avers that Mahāvīra died one year before Buddha.

Between the death of Mahāvīra (*c.* 487 B.C.) and the accession of Chandragupta Maurya, there flourished six heads of the Church. Mahāvīra was succeeded by Sudharma, who was its guide for twenty years. He was the last of Mahāvīra's Gaṇadharas to die and he possessed a knowledge of all the sacred texts. The next successor was Jambuśvāmī (44 years) who was the last Kevali. Jambuśvāmī was succeeded by Prabhāśvāmī (11 years). The next three successors were Śāntinātha (23 years), Yaśobhadra (50 years) and Saṁbhuti-vijaya (8 years). The next pontiff, Bhadrabāhu (14 years), was a

contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya. It is probable that the headquarters of these leaders of the Church continued to be in Bihar, for there can be no doubt that Jainism made a steady if slow progress during these 170 years. Ajātaśatru's grandson Udāyi appears to have been a patron of Jainism and the Nanda dynasty was also favourably inclined towards it. With regard to the progress of Jainism among the masses we have no definite information. It is very likely that it was gaining more adherents in northern U.P., Avanti and Kaliṅga than in Bihar.

THE JAINA PHILOSOPHY

Before we pass on to Buddhism. let us learn something of the Jaina philosophy which was born and took shape in Bihar. To give an initial as well as an integral view to the reader, the essentials of the Jaina philosophy will be summarized here irrespective of the period.

'Jina' means one who has conquered (from the Sanskrit root 'ji', to conquer) and is free. A follower of 'Jina' is a Jaina.

The tradition embodied in Jaina literature is that this religion is eternal and that it is revealed in each cycle of time by a series of teachers called Tīrthaṅkaras (ford-makers across the stream of existence). In the present cycle of time there have been twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras, the first of whom was Rishabha Deva. This tradition is partially supported by accounts found in Brāhmaṇic literature. According to the *Bhāgavat-Purāṇa*, Rishabha Deva was the fifth in descent from Swayambhu-Manu and belonged to a line of saints called 'Vātaraśana Munayah' (saints who lived on air, i.e., who fasted). These saints are also mentioned in the earliest part of the *Ṛigveda*, where a number of hymns are devoted to them, and some of the practices attributed to them are in conformity with the principles of Jainism. It will thus be seen that the prevalence of the Jaina doctrines goes back at least to the earliest Vedic Age.

It is also possible that the Vrātyas (those who followed non-Vedic practices) mentioned in later Vedic literature may have been followers of these doctrines. They are clearly non-Vedic people, but they could be admitted to the Vedic fold by the performance of a few simple ceremonies. The word 'Vrātya' may have been derived from the word 'Vrāta' which means 'a vow', 'to practise some observance'. Another word commonly used for a non-Vedic sect or sects in early Brāhmaṇic literature is 'Śramaṇa', and the antipathy between the Śramaṇas and the Brāhmaṇas is frequently referred to. Though

Śramaṇa denoted anyone who belonged to non-Vedic groups, the word began commonly to be used to specify a Jaina ascetic. Mahāvīra, the last Tīrthaṅkara, is frequently alluded to as the 'Mahā Śramaṇa'. In fact, the followers of all other sects which were opposed to the Vedic cult, such as Buddhism, were also known as 'Śramaṇas'.

The twenty-second Tīrthaṅkara Neminātha is said to have been a cousin of Kṛishṇa and thus to have belonged to the Mahābhārata Age. The twenty-third Tīrthaṅkara, Pārśvanātha, is said to have lived 250 years before Mahāvīra, whose parents are mentioned as followers of his sect. It is now universally accepted that the followers of Jainism were already in existence when Buddha started his quest for truth; for, according to the Atthakatha of *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, an uncle of Buddha himself named Boppa Śākya, a resident of Kapilāvastu, was the follower of the Nigganthas (without a knot), which was another name for the Jainas. When, immediately after his enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, Buddha was on his way to Vārānasi to deliver his first sermon, an ascetic named Upaka, on being told about the enlightenment, characterized him as a Jina, and Buddha accepted the compliment. According to the *Mahāvaṁsa*, when Mahendra and Saṁghamitrā, son and daughter of the Maurya emperor Aśoka, came to Laṅkā (Ceylon) in order to introduce Buddhism in the island, they found the Nigganṭha monks already there. Numerous references occur in the earliest Pāli books to 'chatujjāma', i.e., the four vows of the Nigganthas. These four vows, though named differently, are no doubt the same as those preached by Pārśvanātha. The five vows now accepted as the basic faith of the Jaina creed, namely, non-violence, non-lying, non-stealing, continence and abstinence from worldly belongings or non-possession, were developed by Mahāvīra out of the four principles of Pārśvanātha.

The association of Jainism with Bihar is ancient and very close. Tradition has it that out of twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras, no less than twenty practised penance and attained salvation at the Sammeda Śikhara, popularly known as the Pārśvanātha Hills, which are in the Hazaribagh district of Bihar. Two other Tīrthaṅkaras known as Vasupujya and Mahāvīra attained Nirvāṇa at Champāpura and Pāwa, which are again within the borders of Bihar. It was only the first Tīrthaṅkara, Rishabha Deva, and the twenty-second, Neminātha, who attained Nirvāṇa outside Bihar, that is to say at Kailāsa and Girnār respectively. Mahāvīra was born at Vaiśālī in 599 B.C. according to the prevailing 'Vīra Nirvāṇa Era', which is counted from the day of

his Nirvāṇa on the Amāvaśya day of the month of Kārtika in 527 B.C. The festival of Dīpāwali, which according to Jaina literary tradition, goes back to the early centuries of the Christian Era was inaugurated in memory of the great event of his Nirvāṇa. Since his time, Jainism has come to be known as one of the most important faiths in Magadha. Jaina images were worshipped during the time of the Nandas and numerous archaeological finds, including images from Vaiśālī and a bronze model of Dharma-Chakra from Chausa, prove the prevalence of Jainism in Bihar during the early centuries.

According to the account of the Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang who visited the country during the 7th century A.D., followers of Jainism, known as Nigganthas, were predominant at Vaiśālī, which was at that time on the verge of ruin. During the subsequent period however, Jainism declined so precipitately in Bihar, that even some of the most important sacred places, such as the birth-place of Lord Mahāvīra himself, were forgotten. It has only been through the efforts of modern scholars that the ancient sites are being gradually and correctly identified.

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF JAINA PHILOSOPHY

The Jaina Philosophy may be summed up as follows:—Spirit and Matter are two elements in Nature. They are in contact with each other and this contact, under certain specified conditions, forges various energies and bonds which bind the inherently free spirit and lead it into the varied experiences and positions of life. The creation and activities of these energies can be stopped and the bonds already forged can be destroyed by proper regulation and control of mental and physical activities. The result then is that the spirit emerges pure and free and attains all its inherent powers of supreme knowledge and bliss, and thus achieves its eternal status of Nirvāṇa.

The acceptance of two eternal fundamental elements, the living and the non-living, distinguishes Jaina Philosophy from Monistic Vedānta and establishes kinship with the Śāṅkhya system, which has Purusha and Prakriti as the two fundamentals of Nature. The soul's contamination on account of contact with matter and its consequent bondage, are dealt with in the minutest detail under the Jaina doctrine of Karma. That doctrine says that all the happenings and experiences of one's life are the result of one's own former actions, independent of any superior power such as Almighty God. The

process of terminating the soul's contact with matter and gradually purifying and freeing it from bondage, forms the subject-matter of the Jaina ethical code for the layman and the monk. The seven categories of knowledge, called the seven Tattvas (principles) of Jainism, are Jīva, Ajīva, Asrava, Bandha, Samvara, Nirjara and Moksha.

JAINA METAPHYSICS

The two ultimate realities, Jīva and Ajīva, are further resolved into six substances (shad-dravya) by dividing the Ajīva into five, namely, Pudgala, Dharma, Adharma, Ākāśa and Kāla. Each Jīva or Soul, is an independent and eternal reality. There are an infinite number of such souls in the universe. The main characteristic that distinguishes the soul from the non-soul is that while souls are conscious of their existence and capable of knowing other objects, there is no such capacity in the non-soul or non-living beings. The numerous varieties of living being, with the vegetable kingdom at the bottom and humanity at the top, besides the denizens of heaven and hell, are the result of their internal and external activities. Thus, all living beings (souls) are masters of their own fate without any serious compulsion or hindrance from outside. Thereafter, the five senses and the mind are evolved by the soul itself according to the purity that it attains by the removal of the Karmic dross, which obscures and retards its attainment of the highest status of Paramātmān. That status is characterized by supreme knowledge and bliss, which is open to all living beings. That status once attained, is permanent, and thereafter souls maintain their blissful individuality eternally.

Matter as well as space and time are also substances (dravya), the last two being immaterial and therefore supersensuous. Time and space are conceived as objective realities. Every point of space is pervaded by a particle of time (Kālāṇu). Besides these three non-living substances, two more are conceived in Jainism. They are the medium of motion (Dharma) and the medium of rest (Adharma). Each space-point of the Lokākāśa (part of the infinite Ākāśa) is occupied by the other five substances, namely Jīva (soul), Pudgala (matter), Dharma (medium of motion), Adharma (medium of rest) and Kāla (time). The rest of the sky, called Ālokākāśa, is space pure and simple, devoid of these other five substances which are responsible for all the variety and change prevalent in the world of the senses.

JAINA PSYCHOLOGY

All living beings are characterized by their four instincts (Saṁjñās), namely, Āhāra (hunger), Bhaya (fear), Maithuna (sexual union), and Parigṛiha (passion for possession). Their knowledge of external objects is derived through the five senses working in association with the mind. The plants and other lower beings have only one sense—that of touch—evolved in them. There are others who have, in addition, the sense of taste and so they are two-sensed beings. In this way there are three-sensed, four-sensed and five-sensed beings according to whether they have the sense of smell, sight, and hearing in addition to the foregoing ones. Amongst the five-sensed beings, some have a mind functioning efficiently in them and so they are called Sa-manaska (with mind). There are four passions—anger, pride, deceit and covetousness, and nine minor emotions, namely, laughter, liking, dislike, sorrow, fear and disgust, and three kinds of sexual feelings. Each of the four passions are further subdivided into four kinds according to their power to obscure the purity and rectitude of the mind totally or partially in varying degrees. These passions and emotions are exhibited through three kinds of activities, mental, vocal and physical; they distinguish a man as one who is temperamentally the worst, worse, or bad, good, better, or the best. These temperaments, called Leśyas, are designated by the names of colours—black, blue, grey, yellow, red and white. These six temperaments are illustrated by the parable of a fruitful tree and six men. One man approaches the tree and plans to cut it down to the very root, so that he may gather all its fruits. He is the black-tempered man. The second, with the same object in view, plans to leave the trunk but cut down its main branches. He is the blue type. The third would cut the smaller twigs, leaving the trunk and the main branches; he is the grey type. The fourth would only cut the fruit-bearing twigs, while the fifth would only pluck the fruit; they are the yellow and the red types respectively. The sixth would not like to injure the tree at all, and would content himself with picking up the ripe fruit which drops down of itself in the fullness of time. He is the white type, a symbol of goodness and purity, a thorough saint.

JAINA EPISTEMOLOGY

Self-consciousness and knowledge of external objects are the inherent qualities of a soul, and they are never extinct, howsoever much they may be suppressed or obscured by the dust of Karma. Knowledge,

as we acquire it, is of five kinds. The first two forms of it are quite familiar to us and are easily understandable. Whatever we come to know through perception by the senses aided by the mind, is called mati-jnāna and includes memory and recognition. When we know something which is not cognized by the senses, but is known through whatever is cognized by the senses, it is called śruta-jnāna. All that we learn through words or by an inferential process falls within this category. When, for example, we know about other countries and their people whom we have not seen, through accounts given by others, or learn the presence of fire at a particular place only by seeing the smoke emanating from it, then our knowledge is of this category. The third kind of knowledge is avadhi-jnāna, by which objects situated outside the range of sensual perception, or screened from the view, or too minute to be perceived, become known by a direct mental vision or clairvoyance. This kind of knowledge is said to be natural to heavenly beings but to be acquired by men only as a 'siddhi'. Similarly, when by the special practice of concentration one is capable of reading the minds of others, one has the fourth kind of knowledge, called the manah-paryāya-jnāna. The fifth and last kind of knowledge is the kevala-jnāna, by which the Arhats and other great saints are able to know everything about everything at any given moment of time. The details of the process by which knowledge is acquired through sense-perception are very interesting. Their nomenclature as given above is peculiar to Jainism. No less than three hundred and thirty-six different varieties of these different forms and degrees of knowledge, depending upon the senses, the object and the the nature of perception, are to be found explained in detail in Jaina texts.

JAINA LOGIC

The system of logic formulated in Jainism goes by the name of Syādvāda or Anekānta and Nayavāda. The name Syādvāda is derived from two words 'syāt' and 'vāda'. Syat is the form of the root 'as' meaning 'to be' in the potential mood. 'Syāt-vāda' therefore means the system of expression according to the potentialities of things. Therefore, when we speak of something as 'Syādasti', we mean to convey that the thing has a positive existence from a certain point of view, that is, of its own self. When we say 'Syād-nāsti', we mean that the thing is not different from its own self. Similarly, 'Syād-asti-nāsti' means that 'the thing is by itself and is not other than itself'.

'Syād-avaktavyam' means that it has so many forms and qualities that it is not possible to describe it fully by any one assertion. The rest of the three Vādas, namely, 'Syād-asṭi-avyaktavam' 'Syād-nāsṭi-avaktavyam' and 'Syād-asṭi-nāsṭi-avaktavyam', are arrived at by combining the ideas contained in the first four assertions. This broad and open attitude of mind is adopted in order to prevent a person from being dogmatic or fanatical in respect of his own views while remaining blind to those of others. He should, on the contrary, become cautious, and receptive as well as accommodating and sympathetic in his attitude towards the views of others.

This sympathetic, inclusive and accommodating attitude is carried a step further and made still more logical by what is called the 'Nayavāda'. 'Naya' here means the point of view of the speaker (nayo jnāturabhiprāyo). Someone, say, makes an assertion from the point of view of his ultimate objective. For example, when a man who is lighting a fire says that he is cooking food, we need not think that he is wrong, for he is right by the Naigama-Naya. Similarly, on being questioned as to who he is, if he replies that he is a man, or a living being, instead of saying that he is a cook, he is right according to Saṁgraha-Naya, which consists in using the general for the particular. Again, if he says he is an Indian or a Brāhmaṇa, he is right according to the 'Vyavahāra-Naya', which consists in classifying the geneial, according to certain accepted principles, into species. When, however, he makes an assertion exactly in conformity with his activity at that moment, as when the cook says he is holding the match, he is correct according to the 'Ṛiju-sūtra-Naya', which concerns itself with the momentary state. These four Nayas take into consideration the object and hence are called 'Artha-Naya'. The rest of the three 'Nayas' namely 'Śabda', 'Samabhirudha' and 'Evambhuta', take into consideration the usage of language. When, for example, one says that 'stri' is feminine, that 'dārā' is masculine and that 'kalatra' is neuter, it is only true so far as the linguistic usage or 'Śabda-Naya', is concerned, although, objectively, all the three words signify a woman. Similarly, when using different words such as 'nara', 'jana' or 'manushya' for the single idea of a human being, one is right according to 'Samabhirudha-Naya', which concerns itself with the accepted synonyms, irrespective of their differences in root-meaning and derivation. When, however, one uses a word which truly applies to the object at that particular time, calling, for example, a cow, 'gau' when it goes and 'dhenu'

when it is being milked, one is true and correct according to the 'Evambhuta-Naya'. These are, then, the Nayas of Jainism, which aim at a correct estimate of the truth implied in the expressions of any man.

THE JAINA THEORY OF KARMA

Since God, his mercies, rewards or punishments have no place in Jainism, it relies on its theory of Karma alone to explain the variety of events and experiences in the life of all beings. Karma ordinarily means 'action', but in the Jaina philosophy it also means the subtlest form of matter which envelops the soul's mental, vocal and physical activities while it is in its embodied state. This subtle matter resolves itself into eight kinds of energies capable of covering the inherent qualities of the soul. The 'Jnānāvaraṇīya' (enveloping knowledge) Karma obscures right knowledge; 'Darśanāvaraṇīya' obscures the right attitude of a self-conscious mind; 'Mohanīya' arouses passions and emotions and suppresses right faith and right conduct; 'Antarāya' cripples the capacity for giving, earning, enjoying and exerting; 'Nāma' Karma gives rise to numerous physical and mental conditions; 'Āyu' Karma binds the soul down to a particular bodily form for a specified period; 'Gotra' Karma determines its high or low status and the 'Vedanīya' creates miserable or enjoyable conditions. These are the eight main classes of Karmas which are further split up into manifold varieties of each kind, so that all the conditions of life and experience are accountable to their fruition or frustration, conversion or destruction, and so on, in the natural process, as well as because of the conscious efforts of the individual soul. On this basis, both fate and effort stand justified.

JAINA ETHICS

The Jaina idea of good and evil, virtue and vice, is based primarily upon the sanctity of life. All forms of life, even the smallest insects, are manifestations of so many souls which are capable of purifying and evolving themselves into Arhats. The visible differences are due to the effects of the individual Karma. Nevertheless all souls are marching towards the supreme goal of Nirvāṇa with, of course, periods of advancement as well as retrogression. It is therefore the duty of everyone to help, as far as possible, the onward march of his fellow souls. If no positive help can be rendered, we must, at least avoid placing hindrances in the way of others. Any kind of

obstacle in the way of the progress of other souls, be it a small injury or the deprivation of life, is morally wrong. Thus, those actions which are conducive to the spiritual benefit of oneself and others are good, and those that are injurious to oneself and others is wrong. Ahiṁsā is thus the supreme ethical virtue and all other vows and practices, whether negative or positive, are only special modifications of this cardinal principle for the affording of practical hints to safeguard oneself against any kind of injury to anyone. The five basic vows already enumerated form the Jaina ethical code. They are to be observed by householders as well as monks, with this difference, that the latter observe them far more scrupulously, strictly, and meticulously than the former. For example, the householder may be obliged to cut trees and to pluck fruit and flowers, but the monk must not do so and will avoid, as far as possible, the slightest injury even to a blade of grass. There are eleven stages of moral purity for the householder, culminating in his abandonment of any kind of action involving violence, and curtailing his worldly belongings to the utmost minimum. The last stage of evolution of the householder may be said to be the first stage of the ascetic. The monks are prohibited from possessing anything or resorting to the slightest violence, even to save their own lives. They must lead a life of absolute poverty and the utmost mental purity. Since they are not allowed to keep anything for themselves, they must bear with patience the twenty-two 'Parishahas' (hardships) which include hunger, thirst, cold, heat, mosquito-bite, lying on the bare ground and so on. Forgiveness, kindness, straightforwardness, frankness, freedom from greed, self-control, forbearance, charity, renunciation and concentration are the ten positive virtues to be cultivated by all religious-minded people, whether householders or monks, men or women.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

All religions aim at spiritual purity and advancement, which means and includes the progress of the unit of consciousness embodied in an individual towards the highest enlightenment and bliss of which it is capable. It is particularly so in the case of Jainism, where all worldly achievements are entirely subservient to the progress of the soul. There are fourteen stages of spiritual advancement leading to the *summum bonum* of life which is Nirvāṇa. The lowest stage is called 'Mithyātva' (the state of illusion) in which there is no realization

of the soul as distinct from the material body, and consequently no attempt at leading a spiritual life. When this knot of 'Mithyātva', as it is called, is, by some chance of spiritual enlightenment, broken, the soul suddenly ascends to the fourth stage of right faith, 'Samyaktva'. This, however, may not be the soul's permanent achievement, for it may fall back to the first stage through the third and the second, which are called 'Samyak-mithyātva' and 'Sasadana' respectively. When in the third stage, he is in two minds, right and wrong mixed, while at the second stage one has a very slight glimpse of the right faith, being on the precipice of a fall back to the first stage of falsehood. At the fourth stage one has the right faith, but there is no effort to regulate his own conduct in accordance with the householder's moral code, which constitutes the fifth stage called 'Dosha-virata'. When one renounces all wordly belongings and betakes oneself to the life of a monk, one is at the sixth stage, called 'Pramattā-virata'. Henceforth one's ascent is essentially inward. At the seventh stage, 'Apramatta', negligence of moral observance comes to an end. At the eighth and ninth stage, 'Apurva-karaṇa' and 'Anivritti-karaṇa', an extraordinary purity and progress of the soul is experienced by sages, so that when they reach the tenth stage, 'Sukshma-Samparāya', all the passions and emotions have ceased and only very slight attachment remains. At the eleventh, 'Upaśānta-Moha', even that little feeling of attachment is about to be liquidated; while at the twelfth, 'Kshīṇa-Moha', it is altogether eliminated, so that there is no longer any fear of a fall. At the thirteenth stage, 'Sayogi-Kevali', supreme knowledge (Kaivalya) is revealed, and gradually all the remaining Karmas exhaust themselves, so that one is on the verge of salvation; while at the fourteenth stage, 'Ayogi-Kevali' all the mental and physical activities are assuaged. Beyond that is the stage of Nirvāṇa or complete salvation, which means eternal knowledge and bliss for the soul unfettered by any physical bondage. The study of the Gunasthānas or spiritual stages of advancement is one of the most important things for the followers of the Jaina Siddhānta (doctrine).

Now we pass to the rise and spread of Buddhism in Bihar. It was somewhat later in coming than Jainism, which really started with Pārśvanāth.

The Rise and Spread of Buddhism

There were a number of republics in eastern Kosala and north

Bihar, founded by aristocratic settlers who had divided the land among themselves. In the republics of the Lichchhavis, the Videhas, the Mallas and Śākyas, these founder-members were known as Rajas. Śuddhodana, the father of Siddhārtha, the future Buddha, was really a rich Śākya zamindar, who had three residences, one suitable for summer, the second for the monsoon and a third for winter. Buddha himself refers to his family not as being royal, but as high Kshatriya.

Siddhārtha was born during his father's old age (624 B.C.) at Lumbini-grāma, which is now included in Nepal, while the expectant mother was on her way to her father's estate. The traditional date of the birth of Buddha is the full-moon day of Vaiśākha (May), which is also the date of his enlightenment and death.

The accounts given in the *Lalitāvistāra* of the training of Siddhārtha and his wonderful feats in archery and other military arts may be partly true, for he will have received the usual education of a Kshatriya aristocrat; but later legends, describing how he would lapse into meditation while witnessing outdoor sports, give us a clue to his real temperament. He was a contemplative youth, more interested in the mysteries of life than in its outward pomp and glory, vanity and glamour.

In due course, Siddhārtha was married to a young lady called Yaśodharā, but the marriage does not appear to have increased his interest in mundane affairs. In the course of time his attachment to his family and worldly life began to fade. His eagerness to solve the riddle of life became more and more intense, and he decided to take to the ascetic life. Later legends represent that Siddhārtha took this resolution suddenly, when the 'gods', anxious for his renunciation contrived to give him his first sight of an old man, a sick man and a dead man to convince him that life was transitory and full of misery. He was then shown a serene Yogī to impress upon him that only those who renounce the world can hope to enjoy real happiness. We are further told that he bade farewell to his sleeping wife at dead of night, on the very day on which she had presented him with a son, and that he managed to leave the city on horseback unnoticed. In the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, Buddha himself describes his renunciation as follows: 'A weak-minded person, although himself liable to decay, illness and death, feels horror if he sees another person in decay, illness and death. This would not be becoming to me. While I thus reflected in my mind, oh my disciples, all that buoyancy which dwells in the young, sank within me, all that

spirit of life which dwells in life, sank in me.' It is thus made clear that Siddhārtha had the temperament of one who possesses everything, yet feels that all is vanity.

The period of Siddhārtha's austerities extended over six years. We cannot describe here his varied experiences with different teachers, of whom Alāra Kalāma and Rāmaputta Uddaka were the two whom he held in highest reverence. They treated him affectionately and taught him all they knew, but he did not get full satisfaction. He spent some time at Rajgir, which was then not only the capital of Magadha but a well known centre for most of the noted philosophers of the age, chief among whom were Purāṇa Kāśyapa, Pakudha Kaccāyaṇa, Sanjaya Belatthiputta, Ajita Keśakambalin, Makhali Gosāla and Jnataputta Nirgantha. These are usually known as the famous unorthodox, heretical teachers of the day. They were all advocates of the Sannyāsa ideal and preached various religious and philosophical creeds.

We need not enter into details of any of the philosophical views and theories which, at the time of Buddha numbered sixty-three. They only convinced Siddhārtha that he should steer clear of metaphysics, which he did throughout his life. These teachers and their disciples were perhaps like the later followers of decadent Buddhism, more anxious to defeat one another than to lay down a path of moral progress.

Unable to find peace from any of these contending philosophies and metaphysics, Siddhārtha resorted to a life of austerity and extreme self-mortification. He gave up food and was reduced to a mere skeleton; he even fainted and lost consciousness while trying to meditate. He became convinced by personal experience that mere self-mortification, however extreme, could not lead to salvation; hence the great emphasis in his teachings upon the following of the middle path.

Presently he gave up the path of self-mortification and began to take a limited quantity of food. He retired to the valley of the Niranjanā river (which joins the Phalgu near Gaya) and attained supreme spiritual illumination on the full moon day of Vaiśākha under a Pippala tree, now called the Bodhi tree, near the village of Uruvelā on the outskirts of Gaya.

Later literature gives a graphic description of the efforts of Māra, the king of Evil and Death, to intimidate Buddha and to allure him from his self-chosen path of the quest of self on the eve of his

enlightenment. The Māra episode is obviously a popular account of his internal struggle during the six years of his sādhanā.

After attaining supreme illumination while he was still only 35, (589 B.C.), Buddha spent 45 years in teaching, preaching and converting. He began his sermons, not at Gaya, where he had received enlightenment, but at Sārnāth near Vārānasi. He gradually gained more and more converts, who deserted family life in favour of renunciation. There were Sannyāsis in Brāhmaṇism also, but they were only seekers of spiritual truth and made no effort to secure followers in the manner of missionaries. Buddha made special efforts in this direction, and met with considerable opposition because he was looked upon as one who increased the number of abandoned wives and orphans. The six heretical teachers referred to above were mostly senior to him and already had a considerable following. They opposed Buddha bitterly and some of them even stooped to the spreading of false rumours in order to tarnish his character and so put impediments in the propagation of his religion. Nevertheless he gradually succeeded in getting more and more converts, and he also gained a measure of support from some of the contemporary kings, such as Ajātaśatru and Prasenajit and members of the Kshatriya aristocracy to which he belonged. The itinerary of his life as preserved in Buddhist literature shows that Rajgir, Śrāvastī, Kauśāmbī, Vaiśālī and Vārānasi were among his favourite monsoon resorts. There is a tradition that he went as far as Hastinapur and Taxila during the twelfth year of his ministry, but its historicity may be doubted. His religious activity was usually confined to the Gangetic plain from Śrāvastī in U.P. to Champā in Bihar.

Buddha was fairly successful in his mission but tradition has not, as is the case with the Jainas, preserved any account of the numbers of monks and nuns, laymen and lay-women, that had come into the new Church at the death of its founder. Buddha had a band of able and zealous assistants chief amongst whom were Kachchāyana, Mahākoṭika, Mahāchunda, Ānanda, Upāli, Mahākassapa, Sāriputta and Moggalāna. They had supreme faith in the gospel, a high order capacity to expound it and an extraordinary perseverance to achieve the goal. Their conduct was highly moral and they were believed to possess supernatural powers.

There were other factors favouring the spread of Buddhism. The new religion had adopted a very tolerant attitude towards other systems, as far as laymen were concerned. When Siha, a Vaiśālian

general, was converted from Jainism to Buddhism, Buddha expressed the hope that the general would continue to extend his liberality to his old faith. Buddha disarmed opposition by recommending respect for worthy Brāhmaṇas and by not denying heaven to the followers of other sects. At one place he refers to an Ājīvika saint as going to heaven because he believed in the Karma doctrine. He exhorted Vajjins not to give up Chaitya worship. This broad-minded and catholic attitude naturally helped the spread of the new cult.

Buddhism also offered a special attraction to monks and nuns. Sannyāsins of the Hindu order and Śramaṇas of the Jaina faith had to lead solitary lives in forests or under trees and subsisted on what was offered to them as alms at midday. If any of them fell ill, there was none to look after them. Buddha believed in the 'middle path' and his Saṅgha allowed several concessions undreamt of in earlier times. Monks could stay in specially-built monasteries, could accept invitations to lunch and take both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food. They could also use cots and shoes. Naturally these facilities, which had never before been extended to Sannyāsins, attracted numbers of followers.

We have no precise figures regarding the numbers of Buddhists at the time of the death of Buddha; but Buddhism must even then have been more widely spread than Jainism. The third Buddhist council sent special missionaries to the Himalayan territories, to Kashmir and Gāndhāra, to Maharashtra and Mysore. We may therefore presume that by *c.* 325 B.C. Buddhism had numerous followers in Northern U.P., the Gangetic plain, Bengal, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

It was with great reluctance that Buddha permitted women to enter the order and it is doubtful whether he would have consented to the proposal had not his foster-mother Mahāprajāpati sponsored it. He had, however, the foresight to realize that the admission of women as nuns would undermine moral discipline. He laid down stringent rules, but they could not prevent the inevitable.

Modern scholarship has not yet succeeded in satisfactorily determining the date of the Nirvāṇa (death) of Buddha. India and the world however, recently celebrated the 2500th Nirvāṇa day of Buddha on the basis that he was born in 624 B.C., had Samābodhi in 589 B.C. and that he entered Parinirvāṇa in 544 B.C.

Let us now briefly refer to the organization and management of Vihāras or monasteries. In the days of Buddha, monasteries were

simple structures, but they had a number of officers. The *Chulla-vagga*, an early text, refers to Śayanāsana prajnāpaka (the distributor of lodging), Chīvara pratigrāhaka and Chīvara-bhājaka (the receiver and distributor of robes), Bhāṅḍāgārika (the store-keeper), Nava-kārmika (the supervisor of buildings), Khādyabhājaka (the distributor of food and receiver of invitations), and Alpamātra-bhājaka (the distributor of sundries like needles, scissors and strainers). The names of these offices will give us an idea of how efficiently monastic life was organized. Originally people were immediately admitted to the Saṅgha when they wished. Buddha ordained them himself. Later a period of probation of five years was laid down and admission was only allowed with the concurrence of a meeting of at least ten monks of ten years' standing. People of all castes were admitted as monks and nuns, including barbers, Śūdras and Chaṇḍālas.

In its internal management, the Saṅgha was largely democratic. Buddha was familiar with the procedure of republican administration and he introduced it to a great extent in Saṅgha management. There could be no Saṅgha meeting if the number of monks was less than four. The quorum varied from four to twenty according to the total number in the local Saṅgha. Propositions were regularly moved, discussed and voted upon. Each monk was given a number of small sticks (śalākās) of different colours, each colour standing for a different opinion. These śalākās were collected and votes were counted and decisions taken according to the majority view. If, however, the majority view was against Dharma as propounded in the sacred texts, it was rejected.

The first council to be held after the death of Buddha, took place at Rajgir under the presidency of Kāśyapa. Its main purposes were to take stock of the situation following upon the death of the Master and to settle the texts of Tripiṭakas. The second Buddhist Council was held at Vaiśālī, a hundred years after the death of Buddha. The rules of the Saṅgha allowed a number of concessions to monks and nuns not permitted in other orders. But the monks of Vaiśālī demanded more and more indulgences. They pleaded that a monk should be permitted to take a second evening meal if invited by villagers, that he should be permitted to drink curds and unfermented palm-juice and to receive gold and silver. These pleas were rejected by the Vaiśālī council, whereupon the defeated party started its own separate Saṅgha known as the Mahāsaṅghika school.

Upāli, Daśaka and Śonaka were the three apostles who managed

the Church after Buddha for thirty, fifty and forty years respectively. The fourth apostle was Siggama who died in *c.* 308 B.C., which was the fourteenth year of the reign of Chandragupta Maurya.

While the organization of monks and nuns was on a very satisfactory basis, equal attention was not paid to the problem of the integration of laymen and lay-women. We have seen how the Jaina Church had integrated the laity within its organization; how they had to undergo a special ceremony for admittance and to follow a special set of rules (vows and aṇuvratas minor vows) as members of the new religion and to refrain from admiring and patronizing the founders and teachers of rival sects. Buddhism did nothing of the kind, partly because it had a more liberal attitude and because it did not expect so exclusive an allegiance from its lay followers as it did from its monks and nuns. It had prescribed a general code of lay morality, which had nothing exclusively Buddhistic about it, except the formal recognition of the Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha. The laity was not required to follow any specific Buddhist 'vratas', ceremonies and rituals and there was no vital tie between the laity and the Church. The consequence was that when the church was shattered at the advent of the Muslims and other adverse forces the laity could no longer retain their distinctive existence.

The organization of the Church helped the spread of religion, but it also sowed the seeds of decay. The relatively comfortable life in the Buddhist monasteries induced numbers of indolent men and women to enter the holy order when they were not properly qualified for it. The position was worsened by the practice of admitting monks who had re-entered family life. Early Buddhist texts (*Chullavagga* X. 9. 1 and 15. 1) refer to monks behaving immodestly with nuns and to the birth of children in nunneries. There were monasteries where monks prepared garlands for their former wives or took strong drink and indulged in singing and dancing. When a large number of persons had been admitted as monks and nuns, such lapses on the part of a few were inevitable. But in this case they had begun to occur early enough to give a clear indication of the danger in store for the new order.

Before going further, it is necessary to give a summary of Buddhist philosophy irrespective of the period, for that will help the reader to have an integral view of the part played by Buddha and Buddhism in the history of Indian thought.

The Buddhist Philosophy

SOME PRE-BUDDHISTIC SCHOOLS

It appears that in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., Magadha or South Bihar was not as fully aryanized as the northern part which is usually known as Mithilā. Whereas in Mithilā, Janaka, Yājnavalkya, Gautama and men of their type who were wedded to Vedic culture, dominated the spiritual and philosophical fields, there were only wandering groups of ascetics in Magadha. Of course, some of them must have come from the north, as for instance, Mahāvīra himself, for he was a native of north Bihar.

There is evidence of there having been thinkers also in South Bihar. Like some of their Brāhmaṇical counterparts, these thinkers held that the worldly life of Saṁsāra was dominated by misery and that the ultimate goal of man should be to get rid of it and be free. They held too that the world was constantly undergoing change, and that there was no element in it which was lasting. The attempt was to discover something everlasting or eternal. Once this constant, non-changing or eternal object was discovered, the thinkers felt that it was possible to pursue and secure it. There was a general belief that the way to that state was not by way of the life of the common man, or householder, but by becoming a solitary, detached from family ties. The origin of most of the religious schools or sects of those days is generally to be found in these ideas. How this solitary life of thinking and meditation should be led, and by what principles external or internal, it should be governed, was left to the individuals who chose this way of life to decide. The variety in the externals depended entirely on the whim of particular thinkers. Two broad divisions of these thinkers are known to have existed from very early times. They were the Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇas. The latter were almost exclusively the followers of Vedic culture, and the former, more or less, of the non-vedic schools.

A prominent characteristic of this community of ascetic thinkers of the time seems to have been that the knowledge of the ultimate reality which each of these groups believed to have discovered was regarded as sacred, and could only pass from father to son or from teacher to disciple. Gradually these thinkers formed themselves into groups, each of which had some special external mark to distinguish it from other groups. As already indicated some had faith in the Vedas, others had not. With regard to externals, some wore robes, white or coloured, others went about naked; some carried staves, some shaved

their heads, some grew beards and long or matted hair. The fusion of the Aryan culture of the west Gangetic region with the non-Aryan elements of the eastern part must also have influenced the externals of early ascetic life. The Non-Vedic sects claimed to have discovered the truth, as strongly as did the Vedic ascetics.

Within the Śramaṇa class of ascetics we find several sub-groups, such as the Nirgranthas, Ājīvikas, Achelakas and Gairikas (wearers of ochre clothes). Each of these held their own doctrines about the origin and end of the world, preached their views to their followers, and attracted men and women to their fold. To what extent these groups were influenced by the philosophy of the Veda and of the Upanishads, is not easy to say; but the Ajīvikas and the Jainas admitted the existence of the soul, while some others vehemently denied it. Some of them, such as the Chārvākas, lived a luxurious life, while the Jainas developed a theory of extreme self-mortification. All of them, however, with the exception of the Chārvākas, admitted the misery of worldly life, the theory of cause and effect, the constant change in all the things of the world and the superiority of the life to be attained by the performance of good deeds. In fact, there was no end to speculation and to speculative thinkers, as they discussed questions for which there was no obvious solution, they were obliged to accept as infallible the word of their master. The Upanishads spoke of the existence of the individual and the universal soul, while the Sāṁkhyas preached the doctrine of many 'puruśas', (souls) quite independent of each other. The Jainas also presented a theory of souls more or less like that of the Sāṁkhyas. Against this, there was the Chārvāka doctrine which regarded the soul as being identical with the material body. The Buddhist doctrine of no-soul, which may have come from non-Aryan sources, is a kind of compromise between the views of the Vedic, Sāṁkhya and Jaina theories on the one hand, and the Chārvāka doctrine on the other. The theories of causation advanced by the vedic and non-vedic schools seem to have been modified by the Buddhist doctrine of Pratītyasamutpāda, or the doctrine of dependent or conditional origin. The doctrine of change or constant flux is a compromise between the theories of eternity and cessation, just as the 'middle path' is a compromise between the extremes of self-mortification and self-indulgence.

It appears from the *Samannaphalasutta* of the *Dighanikāya* and its counterpart in Sanskrit as preserved in the Gilgit Manuscripts, that in the seventh century B.C. there lived some six great teachers

who were consulted by Ajātaśatru. These sects were either contemporary with or slightly senior to Buddha. We have no documentary evidence, except in the case of the Jainas, of the works which these sects held as authoritative. It may be that the Buddhist sources gave their own version of their views. It is worth our while, all the same, to note the views of these thinkers and to see how Buddhism compares with them.

Of these six thinkers, Nigantha Nātaputta is no other than Mahāvīra, the founder, or according to Jaina tradition, the last prophet of the present world cycle. He preached the philosophy of Anekāntavāda and ethical doctrines similar to those of Pārśva, who had lived some 250 years before him.

The next important thinker of the age was Makkhali Gośāla. He belonged to the sect of the Achelakas and carried a staff of bamboo. His sect is now extinct. The doctrine advocated by him is styled as 'saṁsāra viśuddhi', or the doctrine of attaining purity or freedom from mundane existence by passing through all existences, the number of which is fixed. He did not believe that there was any special cause for either the misery of human beings or for their deliverance. He did not believe in human effort, and held that all creatures were helpless against destiny. He maintained that every creature, whether wise or foolish, was destined to pass through Saṁsāra, and that his or her misery would cease with the completion of this cycle. No human effort could reduce or prolong this period.

The next thinker of this age was Puraṇa Kasyapa, who was a champion of Akriyāvāda or the doctrine of non-action. He maintained that a man did not incur sin through actions which were popularly known as bad, that is to say, killing, or committing theft, adultery and so on. Similarly he did not earn any merit through his good acts. This doctrine would appear to be similar to that of the Chārvākas.

Ajita Keśakambalin was another senior contemporary of Buddha. He did not believe in the utility of gifts, in sacrifice, in the existence of a heavenly world or in persons possessing higher or supernatural powers. He held that the body consisted of four elements, into which it dissolved after death. He also held that it was useless to talk of the next world. His doctrine is traditionally stamped as Ucchedavāda.

Pakudha Kaccāyana of the Sutta is probably Kakuda Kātyāyana mentioned in the *Prasnopanishad*. His doctrine may be styled Śāśvatavāda. According to him, there are seven elements which are not only

immutable but that they do not in any way contribute to pleasure or pain. The body is ultimately dissolved into these seven elements, which are eternal.

The last among these teachers is Sanjaya Belātthiputta. His doctrine is known as Viksepavāda, or that which diverts the mind from the right track. He declines to give categorical answers to any question or problem facing the human mind.

There are ten unexplained and unanswered problems that have always exercised the minds of men, and that have frequently been spoken of in Buddhist literature. It may be mentioned that these questions were also put to Buddha, and that he too declined to discuss them, though his attitude towards them was different. He maintained that it was a waste of time to discuss them, as these idle questions of a metaphysical nature were in no way conducive to human progress.

Then came Buddha on the scene with his middle path in ethics and metaphysics, and he attempted to solve the problem of life by his doctrine of Majjihima Patipāda. He preached this doctrine for some forty-five years, but after his death his followers codified his teachings and what was once a simple doctrine and faith became a systematic creed as the following treatment of the subject will show.

THE SARVĀSTIVĀDA SCHOOL

The Sarvāstivāda School is a very ancient Buddhist system of thought, if not the most ancient. It was popular in Kashmir, parts of northern India and outside India, as appears from Yuan Chwang's account. The school was elaborated in the Vibhāsas (commentaries), most probably written in the Fourth Council held under the auspices of Kaniska. The school came to be known as Vaibhasika from these days.

Sarvāstivāda upholds the reality of all 'existents'. Literally, the name signifies the objective reality of all that appears to be existent and that again, not only at the time of its appearance but for all time. Things are in constant flux no doubt, but the underlying essence is a durable entity, and never ceases to exist. By existents, the school understands the categories which comprise all existent facts. The categories are diversely classified and the largest sehedule comprises seventy-five items.

The whole reality is in one classification distributed under five

'skandhas', aggregates or groups, of which the first stands for (1) matter with all its varieties, including the sense-organs. Of the rest which are mental facts, (2) Vedanā stands for feeling and intuition, (3) Sañjnā for concepts, (4) Saṁskāra for dispositions and traces, and (5) Vijnāna for cognitive consciousness.

Another classification of reality is in terms of āyatanas (bases), embracing subjective and objective conditions of cognition. The five external organs and the mind are the six subjective bases and their objective conditions are the objective bases existing independently of cognitions and the organs. Colour, sound, odour, taste and touch are the objects of the external sense-organs, as is obvious to common sense. The objects proper of the mind, which is the same thing as cognitive consciousness, are enumerated under sixty-four heads comprised under dharmadhātu.

Another classification of reality is in terms of dhātus (ultimate elements). The six subjective bases, their objects and the resultant cognitions, when viewed as ultimate elements, are designated as dhātus and distributed under eighteen heads. The dhātus are so-called because of their causal efficiency. So far as the subjective bases are concerned they are the determining conditions (adhipati pratyaya) and the objects are the objective conditions (ālambanas) of cognitions. Cognitions *qua* dhātu are also causally efficient (sabhāga) being productive of like successors. With regard to the three unconditioned categories (asaṁskṛitas) included under dharmadhātu, a question has been raised as to the propriety of their inclusion under dhātu. *Ex hypothesi* these unconditioned entities are neither causes nor effects of anything. But as objects of cognitions, they are viewed as the objective conditions, and hence regarded as dhātu. Impermanent things which are produced by causes and conditions (hetupratyaya janitah) are called saṁskṛitas which is rendered by us as 'conditioned'. There are the three a-saṁskṛitas which are eternal entities and are neither the causes nor effects of anything. Among these, the ākāśa (ethereal space) which makes movement of matter possible, has as its main characteristic the absence of obstruction. It does not obstruct nor is it obstructed by anything. It is ubiquitous and self-subsistent. It is the ultimate support of the material world, but is independent of any supporting medium, that is to say, it is self-subsistent. It is a positive entity known by inference on the ground of the absence of obstruction. It is analogous to the Jaina concept of ākāśa and dharma taken together.

The two other eternal entities are pratisaṅkhyānirodha and a-pratisaṅkhyānirodha. Pratisaṅkhyā is pure and undefiled enlightenment, and is the immediate antecedent of Nirvāṇa. Nirvāṇa is an eternal entity which is reached by means of pure enlightenment. Enlightenment becomes pure only when it is free from the influence of defiling passions. This Nirvāṇa is called 'nirodha', which is an intractable concept. In other contexts it means destruction. In the present case, it connotes rather obstruction and barring out. The saint is disentangled from the different taints and defilements and this nirodha is a positive entity which precludes the possibility of future association with the same or similar impurities. Scholars have propounded different interpretations of this nirodha. Stcherbatsky calls it 'a kind of eternal blank'. Pouissin believes it to be a 'dravya'. Both of them are of the opinion that there is no conscious life in this state. It is definite that the nirodha in Nirvāṇa is a positive entity, which is attained by the ultimate realization of the freed individual. The a-pratisaṅkhyānirodha is not the opposite of the former. It is also a positive fact reached by the defection of the requisite causal conditions. There can be no recrudescence of bondage by the future emergence of the passions and taints. This nirodha prevents the subsequent origination of the taints through the medium of the absence of causes and conditions. The absence of the causal conditions is, however, the means of attainment of the state which is a positive fact.

Both these nirodhas play an essential role in the realization of Nirvāṇa, though they do not necessarily occur together and one may precede the other.

The list of conditioned entities is stated to consist of seventy-two heads and these together with the three unconditioned entities constitute the entire gamut of reality.

Even an account in outline of the Sarvāstivāda school cannot be deemed adequate unless we embark upon a short discussion of its fundamental position. The three unconditioned entities are eternal and unchanging verities, but the remaining categories are also stated to be existent in the past, present and future though subject to constant change. Each entity is liable to origination, duration, decay and cessation, all occurring simultaneously. In view of these vicissitudes, how can the conditioned entities be regarded as existent in all the divisions of time? This is the characteristic doctrine which accounts for the designation of the school as Sarvāstivāda. Moreover,

like the Sāṅkhya and Jaina philosophers, the adherents of the school affirm that nothing existent is annihilated, and nothing that is non-existent can come into being. The problem in short is one of reconciliation of the permanent and the impermanent, timeless subsistence and temporal change. Four ancient exponents of the school have propounded four different theories, which are given below.

Bhadanta Dharmatrāta is perhaps the most ancient expositor of the Sarvāstivāda school. His theory is called 'Bhāvanyathātva'. In common with all the adherents of the system, he maintains that the past and future are also existent, if the past entity were entirely defunct, there could be no cognition of it, and without cognition, no assertion regarding it could be made. It is expressly stated in the scripture that a cognition comes into being by reason of the co-operation of the two factors—sense-organ and object. In the absence of either, knowledge, direct or indirect, would not be possible. Knowledge necessarily has a reference to the object, and it can be true only if the reference is verifiable. In the second place, if the past were absolutely defunct, the law of Karma would be entirely abortive. A man would not suffer the consequences of his past sins nor derive benefit from a meritorious act done in the past. With regard to future events it must also be supposed to be potentially existent. Buddha foretold some future events and his prophecies were confirmed by subsequent occurrences. So the existence of things in all the three phases of time must be endorsed without reservation.

It is a fact that the past and the future are not as visible to us as the present. But this only implies a difference in attributes and not in essence. What was the future merges into the present, which in its turn passes into the past. So there is only a change in attribute. The attribute of futurity ceases to make room for the present, which again merges into the past. It is analogous to the transition of gold from one shape or pattern to another. What was a bangle becomes a necklace. The structural attribute changes, but the gold as substance continues.

Bhadanta Ghosaka has a different theory called 'Lakṣaṇānyathātva'. A thing (dharma), in its transition through time, manifests different characteristics (lakṣaṇas). Pastness, presentness and futurity are such characteristics. A thing assumes one characteristic at a time but does not shed the other characteristics. The past is also the present and the future, though the last two are in abeyance for the time being. It only gives rise to different temporal judgements according

to the viewpoint of the knower. The attributes are there. But while one is patent, the others are latent.

The third view, called 'Avasthānyathātva', is propounded by Bhadanta Vasumitra. He attributes the changes in the temporal status to causal efficiency (kāritra). When an entity is related to this causal efficiency, it is called the present. When it becomes detached from it, it becomes the past. It remains as the future when it is not attached to it. These changes are as purely external as the position of a number in the decimal order. The same number acquires different numerical values according to where it is in relation to one, ten, one hundred and so on.

Bhadanta Buddhadeva regards these changes as purely relative. This theory is dubbed 'Anyathanyāthika'. A thing which has no 'before' is past, and a thing which has no 'after' is future, and the present is that which has both 'before' and 'after'. He cites the example of a woman who is at the same time mother and daughter.

All these theories lay emphasis upon the accidental and external character of temporal changes. The entity is one and the same throughout these transitions, and this is apparent from the fact that the past, present and future are but predicates of the same logical subject.

THE SAUTRĀNTIKA SCHOOL

It is a matter of profound dissatisfaction that no accredited work of the Sautrāntika school has so far been discovered. Kumāralāta is reputed to be its chief protagonist and his views have been quoted and criticized by Candrakīrti and others. The schools of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti in logic adopt the Sautrāntika standpoint, but their allegiance is provisional and qualified, since they endorse the idealistic philosophy of the Yogācāra school as the embodiment of accredited conclusions. Yaśomitra also describes Vasubandhu as an adherent of the Sautrāntika tenets, but Vasubandhu was converted by his elder brother Asaṅga to Yogācāra. So none of these are unqualified Sautrāntikas. In logic and epistemology, they accepted the realistic position as a matter of expediency, just like the Vedāntists who have adopted the realistic position of the Bhatta school in epistemology.

Sautrāntikas have been merciless in applying Occam's razor to the categories of the Sarvāstivāda school. As a matter of historical fact, Sarvāstivāda played the same role as the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school in the development of philosophical speculations. The developments

took the line in the first place of criticism of the Sarvāstivāda categories. The Sautrāntika and Yogācāra schools have flourished and prospered at the expense of Sarvāstivāda. They have revelled in the exposure of the antinomies in the Sarvāstivāda tenets, and thus have carved out their way. Nāgārjuna's *Mādhyāmika-Kārika* is also mainly occupied with the demolition of the entological architechtonic of Sarvāstivāda, which flourished in Mathurā, Kashmir, Gāndhāra, and the Central Asian countries.

Vasubandhu, although originally a Brāhmaṇa of Gāndhāra, had great influence with the imperial Guptas and was most probably instrumental in securing the patronage of the Guptas for the development of Nālandā. Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, although originally South Indian Brāhmaṇas are said to have founded their schools in the Nālandā monastery. It is due to these savants that Nālandā became the stronghold of Mahāyāna. During the Pāla period, Vikramaśilā came to share the glory of Nālandā, and Bihar became the centre of Buddhist culture.

In his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* Vasubandhu has criticized the Sarvāstivāda theories. Later writers of the school have done no more than embellish his criticism by elaboration. Bhadanta Dharmatrāta is said to have walked into the spider's parlour. That is to say, he has practically endorsed the Sāṅkhya position by believing in the reality of change. What is present becomes past, and the future becomes the present. But do the future and the present or the present and the past coincide ? If in the transition from one temporal state to another, there is no surrender of any of the previous states, they will all coalesce. The future, the present and the past will all be lumped into one confused whole, and no distinction will be possible. If the previous mode is supposed to lapse, the central doctrine of universal existence collapses.

The doctrine of Bhadanta Ghosaka does not make any improvement on the previous theory. Are the characteristics 'pastness', 'presentness' and 'futureness', numerically identical with or different from the entity? In the first alternative, the confusion of the characteristics is inevitable. In the second, the characteristics will not qualify the entity, and so must float in the air as homeless attributes. The example of a person in love with one woman and implicitly attached to others is no more than a hoax. The love for the one is not incompatible with that for the others, whereas pastness is naturally inconsistent with presentness and futurity. The mutual

opposition of these characteristics cannot be glossed over by any stratagem, and their identification with a basic substance is bound to lead to a split in the integer. The past man or thing must be different from the present, and the doctrine of identity in the midst of change is untenable and preposterous.

The fourth theory of Bhadanta Buddhadeva makes these temporal characteristics relative to the temporal divisions. But he does not explain how the past becomes different from the present or the future. The definitions of past or future or present do not help in the assessment of these determinations. The future becomes present and the present becomes past. If these characteristics are present throughout, the confusion cannot be overcome but if, on the other hand, they are non-existent in one position or another, the doctrine of universal existence will stand refuted. The difficulty of the problem lies in the dynamic nature of time itself. If time be a real self-identical entity, the internal changes involved in the dynamic process will entail the same difficulties in the being of time in relation to which the changes in the things are explained by Buddhadeva. The example of the same woman being mother and daughter is not quite apposite. The terms of reference are fixed, and not capable of coalescence. In the temporal determinations, time itself is in flux, and the temporal determinations tumble into one another.

The third theory, which is based on causal efficiency (Kāritra), is supposed to be the happiest explanation of the puzzle. The past and the future are not in possession of the causal efficiency. It is the present which exercises this efficiency. This makes the demarcation of the present from the rest possible and intelligible. This is said to be the interpretation of Saṅghabhadra who wrote a work in refutation of Vasubandhu's *Adhidharmakośa*, but we shall find reasons to reject this explanation also. The causal efficiency (Kāritra) would either be identical with the entity or not. If it were an external determination, somehow attached to it, it would make the entity present and existent, but would make it a non-entity in the past and future. Causal efficiency is the criterion of existence. We have no other test by which to tell an entity from a non-entity. A fiction has no causal efficiency and therefore no existence. 'To be' is 'to do'. It is therefore preposterous to suppose that a thing, though bereft of causal efficiency, exists in the past and the future. Existence and presentness are inseparable concepts. If, on the other hand, causal efficiency were to be present in all the divisions of time, we should have no

occasion for distinction between past and the present and vice versa. Sarvāstivāda holds that an entity exists for all times, but only comes to have causal efficiency in the present. This is a contradiction in terms. It amounts to the assertion that it both exists and does not exist.

Sautrāntika maintains that causal efficiency, being the determinant of existence, can only be exercised in the present, whereas the realists of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school affirm that causal efficiency is present in an entity not only in the present but also in the past and future. But this is entirely indefensible. What is the proof of causal efficiency? It is the actual production of the effect. If the effects are different, the causal efficiency must also be different. The germinating seed must be different from that which remains idle in the granary. The concept of potential cause is an uncritical postulate which cannot stand the scrutiny of logical test. Why should a thing which is causally efficient fail to produce the effect? The nature of things cannot be freakish. The theory that a thing, though possessed of causal efficiency, becomes productive when associated with auxiliary factors is riddled with contradictions. If the auxiliaries make the cause effective by producing a change in its character, the old entity will be supplanted by a new one. The productive is essentially different from the unproductive. If, however, the association of the auxiliaries does not effectuate a change in the basal cause, it will remain unproductive as before. It must therefore be admitted that the present alone is the real. The past and future are only subjective concepts. In other words, an existent is bound to be momentary (kśanika).

A Sarvāstivādin is not regarded by Sautrāntikas as a faithful exponent of the Buddhist doctrine of impermanence. Impermanence can never be made compatible with permanence in any shape or manner. The doctrine of a timeless existence with temporal divisions imposed on it is only a feeble echo of the Sāṅkhya and Jaina doctrines. The latter philosophers frankly avow their distrust of the laws of logic. They do not find a contradiction in the co-presence of incompatible attributes, viz. existence and non-existence. They assert that things are indeterminate (anekānta) in character. The Sarvāstivāda theory can only be maintained with a show of plausibility if the logic of indeterminacy is endorsed. But Dignāga and Dharmakīrti have shown that indeterminacy is only the refuge of the irrational realist.

As for the contention that the existence of the past is confirmed by the *ipse dixits* of Buddha and the possibility of assertions regarding past and future data, the Sautrāntika does not consider the interpretation of the Sarvāstivādin to be a faithful or logically consistent explanation. The sinner must suffer for the past sin, but this does not argue the bodily continuance of the past sin. The sin is nothing but a mental disposition which, though momentary, recurs in every moment of mental life. It produces the retribution when it becomes mature. The past sinful disposition is not powerful enough to produce the effect all at once, but it gives rise to a series of dispositions until it becomes mature and effective. The cause is what actually produces the effect (kurvadrūpa), and not what will produce (kariśyadrūpa). The Sautrāntika does not believe in what has been designated by Russell and Professor Broad as 'Mnemic Causation', which maintains that the immediate antecedence of the causal condition is not necessary. The Sarvāstivāda does not subscribe to this Mnemic theory either, for the reason that it asserts the continuance of the past but the Sautrāntika explains it by the continual recurrence of similar events.

As for the knowledge of the past or the future, this is not possible without the existence of the data at the time. Assuredly, the recollection of a past event does not presuppose the present existence of the datum. On the contrary this would annul the distinction between the past and the future. Buddha's dictum that knowledge comes into being in a state of dependence upon subjective and objective conditions has relevancy to perceptual cognition, if dependence is understood in terms of causality. If, however, it is understood to mean that a cognition must have a content and objective reference, that assuredly holds good of all empirical cognitions, direct or indirect, intuitional or discursive. The school of Dignāga also maintains the possibility of contentless consciousnesses. It asserts, too, that consciousness is necessarily self-conscious (svasaṁvedana) and thus it differs from Sarvāstivāda, which denies both the possibilities.

Further, the Sautrāntika does not believe in the possibility of unconditioned reals. Space is only a subjective construction, and in their view the two nirodhas are pure nullities.

EPISTEMOLOGY AND LOGIC

Dignāga is most probably the first philosopher to have realized the necessity of disentangling the treatment of 'pramāṇa' (valid cognition)

from that of 'prameya' and it is due to the influence of his school that epistemology (prāmaṇaśāstra) has come to occupy a predominant place in later speculation. The *Tattvacintāmani* of Gangeśa of Mithilā is entirely occupied with epistemological problems. It is unfortunate that the original of Dignāga's magnum opus, the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* has been lost and that Dharmakīrti's works are now the only sources left to us. The importance of epistemological enquiry is obvious. The nature of reality can be determined by means of knowledge, but because error is almost as frequent as valid cognition, it is essential that we should have decisive criteria to enable us to tell valid cognitions from error. Following the lead of Dignāga, Dharmakīrti admits two kinds of valid cognition, viz. perception (pratyakśa) and inference (anumāna). The epistemology of a school is bound to be influenced by its ontological theory and it is the particular momentary entity that is regarded as real by this school. True cognition must therefore have for its content this particular unique 'real'. Universals are mere subjective concepts and so any cognition which has reference to the class-character cannot be valid by itself. This unique particular is envisaged by sense-intuition, but intuition of a particular is bound to be indeterminate, and an indeterminate cognition cannot be of any use in theoretical or practical activity. We cannot regard intuition as the knowledge of 'something' which is necessarily determinate. Knowledge, that is, determinate cognition, must be conceptual and judgemental. Knowledge of even such commonplace objects as a chair, table, pen, tree and so on contains two elements—'this' and 'what'—the first standing for the substantive real and the second for its character. Though according to the Sautrāntika ontology, which is endorsed by Buddhist logicians, a real cannot be a composite or a complex, so that a judgement is bound to be a distortion of the objective fact, yet it is admitted that judgment is the minimal unit of knowledge, so far as its pragmatic utility is concerned. According to Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, the element of 'what' is a necessary abstraction. But we can know a table only as table, that is to say, a thing with some kind of character. This presupposes the analysis of a thing into a substantive and an adjective and their necessary synthesis. This has not been lost sight of by the Buddhist. And it will be apparent from the definition of valid cognition.

Valid cognition is defined as being one that is not discrepant with the real. The test of non-discrepancy is furnished by verification.

It is of a piece with the dictum of Vātsyāyana that a cognition leading to successful activity must be regarded as conversant with the real. This is an essential characteristic of valid cognition. But Dharmakīrti adds another qualification, viz., the novelty of the object. The object of valid cognition must be one that has not been cognized before. This qualification bars recollection from the purview of valid cognition. Determinate cognition, that is, the perceptual judgment following in the wake of sense-intuition, necessarily refers to the content of the original intuition. Hence, in spite of its pragmatic success it cannot be regarded as valid cognition.

There seems to be a large amount of affinity between the Buddhist and Kant, with the difference that Kant does not seem to endorse indeterminate cognition. But the categories are general concepts which are subjective. According to the Buddhist also, all concepts are subjective and a judgement, being conversant with concepts, is bound to be a fusion of the subjective and the objective. Thus it cannot be looked upon as a true measure of reality, but though indeterminate intuition is the true measure of the real as it is, i.e., of the thing-in-itself (svalakśaṇa), it is of no practical use unless it is converted into a judgement. The test of the truth and validity of cognition is said to lie in the absence of discrepancy and contradiction, but this test can be satisfied if there is a successful volitional activity which can be engendered by judgement. It is after all a judgement that can be true or false.

Again, if judgement is not true and faithful to the real, an inference, which is necessarily of the nature of judgement, cannot be regarded as authentic cognition. The acceptance by the Buddhist logician of inference as valid cognition would then be an instance of inconsistency and self-contradiction. In reply to this charge, it is affirmed that though a judgement by itself necessarily involves a distortion of the real in as much as it consists of a mental analysis of the simple unique real into a substantive and an adjective and a subsequent synthesis of the two in one whole, yet it is not false if it bears upon the real. A cognition has a twofold object, viz., a content and a concept. The concept grounded on reality is not false. Determinate perception, which is the same thing as perceptual judgement, is not false when it is determined by intuition. The content, though conceptualized and categorized, is engendered by the thing-in-itself through intuition, and therefore is susceptible of verification. But though perceptual judgement may be verifiable, yet it is not regarded

as valid cognition (pramāṇa) because it lacks the element of novelty. It does not give any new information but only clarifies what has been vouchsafed by intuition. Accordingly it is not regarded as a primary source of valid knowledge. Inference, on the other hand, though it apprehends a concept, is regarded as valid because it gives us new information. It adds to our knowldege. Though it is the concept of fire, that is to say, fire *qua* universal which is the content, it is regarded as a unique individual and leads to the attainment of the same. Even so, this individual fire was not known by an antecedent cognition and inference. An inference is only regarded as valid with reference to this un-pre-cognized individual. Thus, the test of validity is the absence of discrepancy and contradiction.

But is the thing directly envisaged by intuition? This is not possible. Things are momentary, and when the sense-organ takes hold of them, intuition follows immediately. But by that time the object has passed out of existence, and so cannot be the content of existence. This is admitted. Intuition is directly conversant with its content, which is only a psychical facsimile of the real. The criterion of truth of the cognition thus boils down to a likeness of the content with the real (arthasārūpya). The sense-organ is only instrumental in the emergence of the psychosis, which copies the real.

INFERENCE

Inference consists in the cognition of an unknown datum in a subject in which another datum is known to exist. The known datum bears a necessary relation to the unknown and this makes the knowledge of the unknown possible. When stated syllogistically, the existence of the known datum, called the logical ground (hetu) in the subject, is set forth in the minor premisses. The necessary relation is given out in the major premiss. These two facts conjointly are the necessary conditions of inference. The general definition of valid cognition as that of a previously unknown content is also applicable to inference. Only three types of logical grounds are regarded as necessarily concomitant. They are effect (kārya), essential identity (svabhāva) and non-perception of a perceptible fact (dṛśyānupalabdhi). It is the causal relation that can necessarily be universal. Mere observation of concomitance in agreement and difference cannot give a guarantee of the infallibility of the relation. With regard to the necessary relation of coexistent facts, such as is found to be the case in geometry and arithmetic, the guarantee is furnished by the

knowledge of essential identity. Thus, if we are assured of the causal relation between the two, we can infer fire from smoke. Regarding the propositions that the sum of the three angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles, or that two plus two make four, the ground of assurance is furnished by the nature of space and number. The opposite is not conceivable. In all cases, the assurance of the necessary concomitance is furnished by the consideration of the impossibility of the opposite. With regard to non-perception, its basis is also found in the essential nature of the term. That a perceptible thing is perceived when the conditions of perception are present in full, is an ultimate truth. It is the essential nature of the perceptible to be perceived. The combination of the two facts, viz. the perceptible and perceived, is inseparably grounded in their intrinsic constitution. 'Man is mortal' is also an instance of this type of concomitance. Mortality is necessarily grounded in what is human. The absence of perception of an absent perceptible is derived from the positive concomitance (*Siddhabhārati*, part II, p. 63).

THE INFERENCE OF NEGATION

Kumārila has severely criticized the possibility of the inference of negation. The perception of a thing necessarily carries with it the cognition of its existence. Non-perception thus involves the cognition of the non-existence of the thing. There is no necessity for inference. The admission of non-perception as a logical ground is therefore before justification. Dharmakīrti seems to endorse the justice of Kumārila's contention, but he justifies Dignāga's position in this regard by an assertion that negation becomes a matter of inference when a person, through delusion, fails to realize the non-existence of a thing. There the non-perception of a perceivable object serves as the logical ground for the dispelling of the error of the deluded man. He therefore observes that a negative inference does not aim at cognizing non-existence (abhāva), but is resorted to in order to dispel an illusion and to produce a conviction of the non-existence of the thing in an unmindful person. In other words, it only sets forth the conditions of the knowledge of negation, which were not clearly understood by the person under delusion.

The reforms in the structure of syllogism have been dealt with in the Buddhist philosophy of flux. Dharmakīrti reduced the three-member syllogism of Dignāga and Vasubandhu to two, the two premisses with the conclusion suppressed. The logical speculations of

Dharmakīrti cover a comprehensive range of subjects and it is due to his powerful writings that Buddhist logic has come to be regarded as the pattern and model. The subsequent writers of the Brāhmaṇical and Jaina schools, borrowed the terminology and methodology of the Buddhist, and their contributions consisted to a great extent in dotting the *i*s and crossing the *t*s. It is only after the disappearance of the Buddhist order which followed the destruction of the monasteries by foreign invaders in the 13th century, that the school of Navya Nyāya came into vogue in Mithilā and subsequently in Bengal. Buddhist logic once held the same position that Nyāya has come to occupy in the Indian academies of Sanskrit learning.

THE YOGĀCĀRA SCHOOL

The Yogācāra school seems to be very ancient. It has its moorings in the Āgama literature, headed by the *Laṅkāvatāra*. Aśvaghosha largely formulated his philosophy of Tathatā under the influence of the Upanishads. 'The main idea of the Tathatā philosophy seems to be that the transcendent "thatness" is at one and the same time the quintessence of all thought and activity. As avidyā veils or perfumes it, the world-appearance springs forth, but as pure "thatness" also perfumes the *avidyā*, there is a striving for the good as well. As the stage of *avidyā* is passed, its luminous character shines forth, for it is the ultimate truth which only appears illusorily as the many of the world." (*A History of Indian Philosophy*, S. N. Das Gupta, Vol. I, p.132.)

The *Laṅkāvatāra* seems to be more inclined to Nāgārjuna's negative standpoint, and the doctrine of the Tathāgatagarbha, the ultimate source of the phenomenal world, verges perilously on Vedāntic monism. It is extremely difficult to determine from the available data whether Śūnyavāda preceded the Vijnānavāda, or the latter the former. It is possible that they had their advocates side by side from the beginning. Śūnyavāda had probably been in existence before Nāgārjuna, for Nāgārjuna gave what was perhaps the most systematized exposition of Śūnyavāda, just as Vasubandhu seems to have been the first systematizer of Vijnānavāda, which received further elucidation and elaboration at the hands of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti and their followers.

In the *Vijnaptimātratāsiddhi* which consists of two books, *Viṁsatikā* and *Triṁsatikā*, Vasubandhu shows how knowledge can be consistently explained without reference to external objects on the analogy of

dream and error. The most vital part of these monographs consists in the metaphysical and logical demonstration of the impossibility of external matter. Matter cannot be explained on the atomic theory, as atoms are logically indeterminable. An atom, however minute, must occupy space and if the other atoms combine with it they can be conjoined from six spatial directions north, south, east, west, above and below. If such a combination is allowed, an atom must have six facets. If, however all are combined at one and the same point, there will be no increase in magnitude. Nor can matter be supposed to be 'one massive whole', because there are parts discernible and divisible in it. And the logical difficulty of uniting one identical whole with the manifold parts exposes the weakness of the theory. It is extremely difficult to understand how 'one' can be 'one' and 'many' at the same time. The extra-mental material world, therefore, is only a figment of illusion.

Dharmakīrti comes to this conclusion by approaching the problem from the epistemological standpoint also. Consciousness and content are invariably felt together. This invariable and infallible concomitance (sahopalambhaniyam) is not intelligible except on the basis of identity. It has been assumed by the Sautrāntika that the content of consciousness is the structural facsimile of the external object. This similitude of the mental content with the external object is supposed to be due to the causal operation of the objective fact, but this is only an unproven assumption. There is no instance in which the content and the object can be perceived distinctly and compared, because all cognitions are believed to be conversant with the copy of the object and not the direct object. The persistence of the belief in the 'extra-mental real' cannot be adduced as proof, without the sanction of indubitable evidence, which however is not available. Truth cannot be determined by the vote of an unenlightened majority. Besides, the relation between the cognition and the cognizable is not logically intelligible. If the object stands in the relation of 'otherness' it cannot be supposed to come into relation. If 'blue' be as different from consciousness as 'yellow', we have no means of determining that the cognition is of blue and not of yellow. But the structural similarity of the content with the external object has been regarded as the means of the cognition of the external object. It is extremely difficult to conceive the possibility of the reproduction in the mind of the structural plan of a material thing which is non-spatial in character. Consciousness is imagined to be

like the mirror in which the image of the external object is supposed to be reflected. The analogy of consciousness with matter is extremely vague and has no direct evidence in its favour. Moreover, in the Sautrāntika theory of universal flux, nothing remains constant for two moments. The relation of the percipient with the external object is possible through sense-object contact, which is believed to be followed by sense-perception, but the object cannot persist, being momentary, till the emergence of sense-perception. The perceptual cognition must come into being at a time when the object is *non est*. The object cannot therefore be supposed to leave any impress upon the psychosis simply because the object is not present. It has been supposed however that the psychosis emerges with the image of the object, as though the object is not present at the time. This seems to be an argument of despair. Moreover, structural similarity is not in itself an intelligible concept. It may mean a reproduction of the shape and form of every part and of the plan of combination and if there be complete reproduction, the physical and the psychical anologues will have no distinction. Perfect similarity is indistinguishable from complete identity. It must therefore be conceded that the structural similarity postulated by the Sautrāntika realist is partial. But that is not susceptible of precise determination. Similarity in this case is not capable of mathematical measurement. A remote resemblance between some point or other has no pragmatic value, because in that case all things can be regarded as similar, at least in respect of the attribute of existence.

Dharmakīrti accordingly lays stress upon the identity of the cognition of consciousness and content, and concludes that the content does not differ from consciousness. The inference of the external object on the basis of the similarity of the content is only a concession to the realistic bias. There cannot be indisputable evidence of the existence of the extra-mental real. With regard to the contention of the other realists that the external object is known directly without any modification in the psychosis, this also fails to explain why 'A' is perceived and not 'B' when both of them are equally present and capable of being perceived. The idealistic thesis, summed up in the dictum of 'sahopalaṁbha' (one identical cognition) of Dharmakīrti and the *esse est percipi* of Berkeley is thus entailed by the *reductio ad absurdum* of the realist's epistemology. These philosophical arguments have been elaborated with meticulous precision and the realist's position is subjected to scathing criticism. Considerations of space

prevent us from entering into a more detailed examination of the issues.

It is maintained that the appearance of the plurality of objects is due to past mental habits and predispositions (vāsanas) which are ultimately rooted in nescience. As we have remarked, the philosophy of Vijnānavāda has great affinity with that of the Upanishads. Whereas the philosophies of Aśvaghosha, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu appear to culminate in monism, Dignāga and his followers seem to believe in a plurality of consciousness centres, which are however momentary and fluxional in character. The ultimate reality that is envisaged in the state of perfection (Arhatta), is pure consciousness, free from the subject-object polarization, which is the characteristic of empirical cognitions in the imperfect state.

THE MĀDHYAMIKA SCHOOL

Fortunately Nāgārjunas' work, the *Mādhyamika-Kārika*, with the commentary *Prasannapāda* of Candrakīrti has come down to us as the precious heirloom of our cultural heritage. There are other works, namely, *Catuśśataka* of Āryadeva, and the last chapter of *Bodhicaryāvatārapanjikā*, which deal with Śūnyavāda. There is also an extensive literature enshrined in the Tibetan and Chinese translations.

The approach of Nāgārjuna's school is essentially polemical and destructive. The realistic categories of the Sarvāstivāda school are the chief targets of criticism. Nāgārjuna revels in picking holes in these realistic tenets. First of all he assesses the theory of Pratītya-samutpāda (causation). He shows that the relation of cause and effect is not logically determinable. Cause and effect are not identical, since this involves the preposterous consequence that the effect is produced by itself. Nor are they numerically different, because that would take away the basis of affiliation of specific effects to specific causes. Nor can we find an explanation in the combination of both identity and difference, because the two concepts are mutually repellent. Nor is it supposable that the relation is neither one of identity nor of non-identity because of the dictum of the law of the 'excluded middle' which lays down that the admission of one opposite makes the denial of the other inescapable and vice versa. Again it is not arguable that an effect is produced without a cause, because it goes against the irresistible presupposition of causation that every event has a cause. In the succeeding chapters, Nāgārjuna takes up the examination of the different concepts and categories of realistic

philosophy and mercilessly exposes the antinomies inherent in them. His criticism of the concept of motion reminds one of the puzzles of Zeno. Motion as a process is not predicable of the part of space that is supposed to have been traversed, nor of the untraversed residuum. There is no third intermediate space between the two. Again the goer does not go. He becomes a goer only by going. Nor can we suppose that the non-goer goes. That would annul the distinction between the moving man and the resting man. He again ridicules the logician's mission to determine the nature of things by means of definition. A definition is but the statement of a defining characteristic. But does the characteristic belong to the subject? If it is other than the subject there will always be a hiatus between them and the characteristic will not be predicated of it. If the two are identical, the art of definition loses its function. Nāgārjuna takes particular care, as do also the other Buddhist philosophers, to show that these conclusions are not in conflict with the *ipse dixits* of Buddha; on the contrary, his is the correct interpretation.

Nāgārjuna shows that the whole world of pluralistic phenomena is nothing but unmitigated appearance. The ignorant man is deceived by his inherent 'idols' and prepossessions. It is necessary to remember the unreality of all that appears on both the subjective and the objective plane. Ultimate truth is to be envisaged courageously and without fear. All cravings and possessive impulses are to be overcome. There is no ego, nor anything to be possessed. Philosophizing is only a negative help, inasmuch as it enables a man to convince himself of the unreality of everything that he hugs to his breast as a precious possession. The ultimate truth, however, is to be realized by a super-empirical vision.

What is the nature of the ultimate truth? Nāgārjuna strongly refuses to commit himself to any one of the philosophical tenets. He declines to characterize it as Being or as Non-being or both or neither. Herein lies his difference from Śaṅkarācārya. Stcherbatsky is of the view that the ultimate reality is positive. It is difficult to make out from the text of Candrakīrti or from Nāgārjuna's words whether he believes in a positive Absolute like the Brāhmaṇa of the Upanishads, or the opposite of it. The Vedāntist holds the view that appearance has the semblance of reality because it has its being and support in the Absolute Brāhmaṇa, which it serves to screen from the unenlightened. But we do not find any such commitment on the part of Nāgārjuna and his followers. Dr Murty makes Nāgārjuna affirm

an unqualified positive ultimate truth as the basis of the world-show. But we are not sure of a positive background in Nāgārjuna's philosophy, because we have failed to light upon any undubious textual evidence.

AJĪVIKISM

Magadha and North Bihar were also the scene of the activities of the Ajīvikas, who taught a kind of materialist philosophy. According to them all beings, all that have breath, all that are born, all that have life, are developed by destiny, chance, and nature. They did not believe in sacrifices, offerings and after-life. Their leader Makkhali Gosāla was a contemporary of Mahāvīra. The two heretic leaders spent six years together after their meeting in a village near Nālandā, mostly visiting places in Magadha.

When Gosāla attained occult powers, he made Śrāvastī his headquarters, and there he obtained his strongest support. But there is no doubt that the Ajīvikas enjoyed considerable influence in Magadha. Mahāpadma Nanda was probably a patron of Ajīvikism, and he may have given special support to the Ajīvika Saṅgha. There is a tradition that Chāṇakya, after cursing the last Nanda, escaped from his clutches in the guise of a nude Ajīvika ascetic. This suggests that Ajīvikas were numerous in Magadha in the times of the Nandas and that they were free from persecution by the royal officers.

CONCLUSION

It must be admitted that Buddhist philosophy, particularly of the Mahāyāna school, exercised a profound influence upon the development of philosophical speculations in India. It gave a severe shaking to the self-complacency of orthodox thought. In logic, epistemology, metaphysics and ethics its contributions are substantial and stimulating. Though the Brāhmaṇical schools were occupied for a considerable length of time with criticism of the Buddhistic tenets, their indebtedness to Buddhist thought is obvious. Thought grows by criticism and opposition. And even if the influence of Buddhism was purely negative, it has been instrumental in evolving a philosophical attitude which has had an abiding influence. In ethics, the influence of Buddhism has been most pronounced. And we shall find that the Brāhmaṇical discipline has incorporated all that is good and noble in Buddhist thought. It is a pity that Buddha's condemnation of Vedic ritualism produced an unwholesome reaction both

among his followers and his opponents. Religion for the common man is always bound up with his everyday problems and interests. The average man is not a seeker of that ultimate truth and salvation to which Buddha showed a new way. When it became the religion of the masses, Buddhism had to come down to the level of the average man. Buddha was deified and worshipped in order to satisfy the ordinary desires for wealth, position, honour, offspring, power and the like. In its later development Buddhism became no more than a feeble imitation of Vedic ritualism without the halo and spiritual glamour that are associated with Vedic ceremonies and mantras. It has succeeded however in winning over millions of mankind to the mission of spirituality.

The above brief survey of its religious movements shows that Bihar was inclined to make various experiments in religion and philosophy. Traditional Vedic religion was there, but philosophical debates and discussions in the court of Janaka show that even its custodians were keen on checking old beliefs and suggesting new views and theories. The different protestant schools were not willing to accept a common system of religious practices and philosophical theories. Some of them, such as Jainism, prescribed a new and rigorous system of beliefs and practices and were keen on preserving their identity by prohibiting their followers from mixing with those of other faiths. Others, like Buddhism, adopted a more tolerant attitude. They conceded that people belonging to other faiths could also go to heaven if they led virtuous lives and that the laity might extend their patronage to all deserving sects and denominations. The Buddhist Saṅgha represented quite a new experiment in the organization of religious life, an experiment which had never been tried before in India or elsewhere.

It was inevitable that considerable influence should be exercised by these systems over one another. Renunciation became more common in Hinduism and contemporary Dharmaśāstras began to permit sannyās as an alternative course. The efficacy of Vedic sacrifices involving the slaughter of animals began to be questioned on a wider scale. Buddhism believed in Nirvāṇa, but it could eschew neither heaven nor heavenly gods such as Indra, Brahmā and Kubera. The doctrine of Karma became a matter of universal belief after *c.* 400 B.C. Buddhist and Jaina monks did not act as professional priests as did Hindu Brāhmaṇas, but found it necessary to associate themselves with the laity in order to pronounce benedictions

Maṅgalasuttas or Ashtamaṅgalas) on auspicious occasions such as childbirth and marriage. The popular beliefs in spells, charms, incantations and exorcisms were not dislodged by any of the new protestant movements, which were obliged to compromise with them. The Chaitya, Nāga, Yaksha and Tree-worship, were borrowed from pre-Vedic religions both by orthodox and protestant religious systems.

B. Society

Varṇāśrama

Varṇa (Class and Caste)

The caste system in its germinal form goes back to the Vedic age. The Aryans had already developed it to some extent by the time they reached Bihar. Whether there was a similar system among the pre-Vedic peoples of Bihar, we do not know. Certain it is, however, that the caste system did not develop any rigidity during this period.

There were several classes in society, some of which were regarded as high, some as low. The cultivators, labourers, masons, artisans, potters, rush-workers, fishermen and so on, were regarded as low. It was believed that an Arhat or a Buddha could never be born among them. The position of the Śreshthin or merchant is difficult to determine. He did not belong to the two privileged classes, but, owing to his wealth he must have commanded fairly high respect, as is shown by the references to and descriptions of merchants such as Anātha-piṇḍaka and Ānanda Gahapati in Buddhist and Jaina literature. The Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas constituted privileged classes but their relative superiority is difficult to determine. Buddhist and Jaina literature, as well as tradition, gives, the highest place of honour to the Kshatriyas. In *Vāseṭṭha Sutta,* Buddha makes Vāseṭṭha confess that Kshatriyas are superior to Brāhmaṇas in every respect. The Jaina tradition points out that the embryo of Mahāvīra had to be miraculously transferred from the uterus of Brāhmaṇī Devanandā to that of the Kshatriyāṇī Triśalā in order that the calamity of the future Tīrthaṅkara being born in a Brāhmaṇa family should be averted. Brāhmaṇical literature on the other hand, represents Brāhmaṇas as superior to Kshatriyas. In the Bihar of this period, Rishis such as Mādhava, Bharadvāja, Aṅgīras and Gautama, must have been highly honoured even by their royal patrons; but ordinary Brāhmaṇas, with no pretensions to scholarship or saintliness must have been regarded as socially inferior to kings and members of aristocratic Kshatriya families such as the rajas of Vaiśālī, Videha

and Kapilavastu. The decline of faith in the Vedic, and especially the ritualistic religion consequent upon the rise of Upanishadic, Jaina and Buddha movements, must have told further against the position of Brāhmaṇas, which was certainly not as high as that of their confrères in the Kuru-Panchāla country. When hard pressed, Brāhmaṇas are permitted by the *Dharma-Sūtras* to follow the professions of Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas. The Jātakas show that they very often availed themselves of this permission, for reference is made to Brāhmaṇas who undertook agriculture, cow-herding, goat-keeping, trade, hunting, woodwork, coach-driving, snake-charming and so on. The Kshatriya Aryan colonizers of Bihar seem to have possessed more than an ordinary sense of their own importance and superiority. The Lichchhavi 'rajas' would not allow anybody to bathe in their Abhisheka-pushkariṇi (the tank for the coronation bath), while the city itself was divided into three wards the members of which could marry girls belonging only to their own fraternity. The Śākya Kshatriya aristocracy was also very proud of its stock. The king of Kosala was a Kshatriya, but the Śākyas, though his vassals, would not entertain the proposal of giving a Śākya girl to him in marriage. When pressed to do so, they played the trick of passing off a girl of illegitimate birth as a full-fledged Kshatriya to be married to the Kosala king! They had later to pay dearly for this trick.

These extreme views regarding class superiority and intermarriage were not however shared by all, especially in the earlier period. We have seen already how Dīrghatamas had married a Śūdra maid-servant of the queen of the Aṅga country and how his sons were later admitted into the Brāhmaṇa fraternity, but Prince Nāblāga, an early member of the Vaiśālī dynasty, had married a Vaiśya girl and thereby been deprived of his right to succeed his father. His sons fought for the throne in their turn and vindicated their right to it by conquest. Their line however, was known as a Vaiśya dynasty. A later descendant of theirs, king Marutta, was again recognized as a Kshatriya. Contemporary *Dharma-Sūtras* show that the marriage of a male with a girl of an immediately lower caste was tolerated by society and their children were regarded by some as belonging to the caste of the father and by others to that of the mother. To conclude, down to the end of this period, inter-caste marriages occasionally took place, but were not looked upon with much favour by society as a whole. The aristocracy was dead against them, as it believed that they lowered the purity of their stock. They

were however legal and did not give rise to mixed castes. Jātaka evidence shows that marriages generally took place within the same class.

As far as interdining is concerned, it was still common in this period, as it was in the Vedic age. Jaina and Buddhist monks as well as Hindu Brahmachārins were permitted to accept cooked food from houses of all persons of good character. There were no caste restrictions in the matter. Non-vegetarianism was fairly common even among Brāhmaṇas and that factor presented no difficulties. Śūdras were accepted as cooks even for sacrificial purposes as long as they were cleanly shaved and bathed before entering the kitchen.

Regarding the professions, they were usually hereditary but Jātaka evidence goes to show that departures from the norm were fairly common. Intellectual and religious pursuits were usual with the Brāhmaṇas, and Upanishadic evidence shows that king Ajātaśatru of Vārānasi and Janaka of Videha took keen interest in the philosophical problems of the age. Other kings, such as Aśvapati Kekaya and Pravāhana Jaivali are even represented as having been teachers of Brāhmavidyā and among their students, we find Brāhmaṇas. Some scholars are inclined to regard these statements as purely complimentary and not corresponding to the facts of actual life; but the evidence supplied by ancient Bihar shows that we cannot accept this view as correct. Here we find Buddha and Mahāvīra founding new philosophical systems and many of their disciples, such as Sāriputta and Moggalāna, being Brāhmaṇas. Makkhali Gosāla, a well-known teacher was also a non-Brāhmaṇa. We need not therefore disbelieve the above Upanishadic evidence and conclude that Kshatriyas were in no circumstances recognized as teachers by Brāhmaṇas, even in religion and philosophy. Of course, we do not come across any instance in Bihar of a Kshatriya becoming a Vedic priest, as was the case with the Kuru prince Devāpi. The Kshatriyas of Bihar were attracted more by philosophy than by theology and liturgy. Their number cannot in any case have been large; they were exceptions to the general rule. The normal Kshatriya was interested in the military arts and administration, and was often also a landlord. But the Jātakas refer to many cases of enterprising Kshatriyas becoming traders, potters, florists and so on. The Vaiśyas followed the usual professions of trade and agriculture. Those of them who were rich, or members of the guild executive, were highly honoured. Poorer Vaiśyas and all Śūdras followed various minor arts and crafts.

Chāṇḍālas are referred to for the first time in the early Upanishads as being of very low status. They were untouchables and if we are to trust Jātaka evidence, they were regarded by society not only as untouchables, but also 'unapproachables' and 'unseeables'. The daughters of a sethi, a Vaiśya, abandoned all the food they had taken for a picnic, when it happened to be contaminated by the eyes of some Chāṇḍālas.

Slavery is not referred to in Vedic and Brāhmaṇical literature, but the Jātakas, many of which belong to this period, refer to domestic slaves. There were no slave markets in India as in Greece and Rome. Individuals who sold themselves into slavery to escape starvation, soldiers taken captive in war, debtors who could not pay their debts and condemned criminals formed the usual categories of slaves. Slaves of the first three categories could, however, usually regain their freedom if somebody paid their price or debt. We do not come across any runaway slaves, indicating that the treatment of the slave was not usually bad.

It is often said that Buddhism started a crusade against caste distinctions and privileges. This is only partly true. As far as the monastic order was concerned, over which alone Buddha had complete control, he had definitely declared that all caste differences must disappear in it and he admitted people of all classes. Some of them, like Upāli, who was originally a barber, became leading lights of the new faith. Among other notable monks were Sunīta, originally a Pukkasa, Sāti, the son of a fisherman and Nanda the son of a cowherd. Among nuns, Chāpā was the daughter of a deer-stalker, Śubhā of a smith, while Puṇṇā and Puṇṇikā had been born of slave girls. There are some passages in early Buddhist texts where Buddha points out that the caste-system is unnatural, because no natural distinctions mark off one caste from another, as is the case with the species of animals and he cites in illustration the cow and the tiger. These arguments were probably intended by Buddha to justify his admission into the Saṅgha of the members of all castes. The *Vāsettha Sutta*, however, makes it quite clear that in the mundane sphere, Buddha was a partisan of his own Kshatriya caste and was as keen to establish its superiority over Brāhmaṇas in every respect, as the latter were to emphasize their superiority over the former.

ĀŚRAMAS (STAGES IN LIFE)

As far as Āśramas are concerned, the Brahmacharya Āśrama was

taking a concrete shape during this period. Vedic literature refers only to a few rules lying scattered through different Suktas, but the *Gṛihya* and *Dharma-Sūtras* composed in this period lay down detailed regulations for the conduct of the student. Upanayana was performed in the case of all dvijas, Brāhmaṇas, Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas. The Gṛihasthāśrama was already there. The opinion of society was sharply divided in this period as to whether Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa should be regarded as obligatory stages for every individual. Vedic literature indicates disapprobation of those who renounced the world, and the *Baudhāyana Dharma-Sūtra,* written in 400 B.C., is vehement against the Āśramas and especially against Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa, because they came in the way of regular Vedic sacrifices. But we have shown already how a wave of renunciation and asceticism was passing over society in Bihar from 800 to 500 B.C. : it was therefore no longer practical to oppose Sannyāsa. Some *Dharma-Sūtras* were inclined to permit renunciation as a course alternative to Gṛihasthāśrama but the modern theory of the Āśramas prescribing Brahmacharya, Gārhasthya, Vānaprastha and Sannyāsa, one after the other, had not yet been evolved at this period. The account of *Mārkandeya-Purāṇa* regarding the kings of the Vaiśālī dynasty no doubt refers to several kings, such as Bhalandana, Khanitra, Marutta, Narishyanta and Mankhadeva who became recluses in the evening of their lives. But there the Purāṇa is probably projecting the ideas of a later age.

The evidence of the *Dharma-Sūtras* and of Jātaka literature shows that joint families were common and that separation was not looked upon with favour. Marriage was not yet compulsory for girls; some of them, like Sulabhā, Gārgi and Sāki, could remain unmarried and renounce the world. The marriageable age of girls was about sixteen and those of them who like Sundarī, had no brothers, could inherit the father's property. Widows could not ordinarily inherit the property of the husband and we have an instance of a monk named Sudinna of the village Kalandaka being persuaded to re-enter family life as he was sonless and there was danger of his property escheating to the state. The story of the retirement of the sage Yājnavalkya shows that strīdhana (woman's property) included gifts from the husband. A few cases of Satī are recorded and the widows of the kings Khanitra and Varishyanta are stated to have ascended the funeral pyre. It is likely, however, that the Purāṇas which describe these incidents may be projecting later customs in earlier history. The

case of Mādri is worth considering, but she immolated herself because she was not sure that she could lead an ideal life. Among the thousands of the widows of heroes slain in the Bhārata War, none followed their husbands as Satī, though some of them killed themselves by drowning. Conjugal fidelity was the accepted ideal and repeated faithlessness entitled a husband to kill his wife. The Purāṇas also record some cases of abducted women being admitted back into their former families. For instance, king Avīkshita married a Vidiśā princess after rescuing her from her abductor. Spinning and weaving provided a means of maintenance for indigent women and widows. There is no evidence to suggest the existence of the Purdah system. Buddha's foster-mother Mahāprajāpati followed him on his journeys without any veil. Women are, however, rarely seen as regents or administrators during this period. There was an instinctive feeling that they were not equal to men and were to be under their guidance. This is clearly indicated by the rules for nuns laid down by Buddha; e.g., a nun, even should she be a hundred years old, must rise in reverence before a monk recently admitted to the Order.

It appears that in places like Vaiśālī and Rajgir, beautiful girls were installed as the Nagara-śobhinis, or town ornaments (courtesans). They were not despised, but given a place of honour and Buddha himself did not deem it below his dignity to accept an invitation from Āmbrapallī, the chief courtesan of Vaiśālī. City courtesans lived a life of ease and affluence, for they earned well. They were experts in music and dancing and were accustomed to go out in pompous processions accompanied by their retinue and admirers. Singing and dancing were the chief amusements of the age. Drama was not yet evolved; but Magadha was famous for its minstrelsy. Many bards roamed about from place to place singing popular ballads and contributing to the recreation and education of the public. Some carried pictures while singing religious songs which were known as Maṅkhas. Makkhali Gosāla was probably the son of such a bard. Public festivals or Melās (fairs) were very common. They included music, dancing, fireworks and races and a number of shops for the sale of food and wine were opened on such occasions. Melās served an economic purpose, for various commodities were bought and sold in shops and stalls specially erected for the purpose.

The Vedic sacrificial sessions also often assumed the form of a Melā and offered similar amusements and facilities.

The vast majority of the people were non-vegetarian. Jātakas mention that Mithilā, capital of Videha, had slaughter-houses and animals were killed in Vedic sacrifices. Buddhism did not prohibit meat-eating, provided the animal had not been expressly killed for the monks. The *Gṛihya-Sūtras* and *Dharma-Sūtras*, most of which were written before 300 B.C., prescribe meat at the time of the first ceremonial food-taking of the infant.

C. Education, Sciences, Language and Literature

EDUCATION

Bihar had not yet developed any educational institutions during this period such as Taxila in Gāndhāra. The latter also was only a noted centre of education ; not an organized educational institution. It was a famous city where teachers congregated in large numbers and imparted education in language, literature, military science, crafts, and fine as well as useful arts. The fame of Taxila had reached Bihar, and the Jātakas occasionally refer to princes such as Pasenadi of Kosala, Bandhula of Kuśīnagara and Mahali of Vaiśālī, proceeding to Taxila for higher education. Some of these, like Mahali, are stated to have opened schools at their own palaces in Bihar, where a large number of students congregated, but these were rare. Contemporary *Dharma-Sūtra* literature shows that the teacher used usually to carry on his mission individually, instructing about a dozen students who came to him. The Vedas, Vedāṅgas, Upanishads, Itihāsas, Gṛihya-Sūtras and Dharma-Sūtras were among the chief subjects of study. Archery and the military arts must have been specially cultivated by the scions of the Kshatriya ruling clans at such centres as Vaiśālī and Kuśīnagara. Instruction in trade, accountancy, agriculture and cattle-breeding were given to the Vaiśya class. Music, dancing and the fine arts were cultivated by those who were interested in them. The art of painting had also made its appearance and the Maṅkhas used painted boards to illustrate religious songs.

Buddha had laid down rules for the proper training of the novices in monasteries. The latter, however, had not developed into educational centres, as they were to do a few centuries later. Royal houses patronized learning by awarding prizes to distinguished scholars. This was done at Mithilā by Janaka and at Pāṭaliputra by the Nandas. Rājgṛiha was also a great intellectual centre, where a number of philosophers congregated in order to get their new theories recognized and accepted.

THE SCIENCES

The natural sciences were not very much cultivated during the period. The *Arthaśāstra* was probably written in Bihar and in it are detailed observations about colours and the constituents of different ores. It is quite likely that the people of Bihar were taking some interest in this problem, as there were numerous mines in the region.

Jīvaka, the physician of Buddha, was very famous. It is quite likely that he made researches in medicine, but the book that bears his name is a much later product than this period. Medicine was more assiduously cultivated in Bihar than in the adjoining provinces and Jīvaka's services were requisitioned by the king of Ujjayini.

Pāṭaliputra was a centre of mathematical and astronomical studies in the Gupta period; whether it was so in this age also, we do not know. Imperialism had started its career in right earnest in Bihar at this time and this might have given an impetus to political thought and the science of war. Some of his predecessors mentioned by Kauṭilya might have belonged to Bihar. They had written about many of the subjects which were treated by Kauṭilya.

SANSKRIT LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

It was during this period that the Vedic Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Upanishads, *Kalpa-Sūtras*, *Gṛihya-Sūtras* and *Dharma-Sūtras* were composed. It is difficult to assign any of these works definitely to Bihar alone.

Aṅga and Magadha were beyond the pale of Aryan culture in the Vedic period, so that we cannot ascribe any portion of the four Vedas to Bihar. Probably the same is the case with Brāhmaṇa literature. It is true that Brāhmaṇas such as the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* show an acquaintance with Kāsi and Videha and that some of the personalities mentioned in them had visited these areas. But the Sarasvati basin was the centre of Vedic culture in the Brāhmaṇa age and we may therefore presume that the portion of the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* which gives an account of the adventure of Videha Māṭhava, was not written in Bihar, but in the Kuru country.

We may claim however that the third and fourth books of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka-Upanishad* were inspired by the thought ferment in Bihar.

The third chapter gives an account of the philosophical views of nine of the thinkers assembled at Janaka's court: Yājnavalkya, Aśvala, Jaratkārava, Bhujya, Ushasta, Kahola, Gārgī, Uddālaka

and Śākala. In the fourth chapter, King Janaka of Mithilā gives a summary of the instructions which had been given him earlier by five other teachers, Śailini, Uṇḍaka, Barku, Bhāradvāja and Satyakāma Jābāla. Many of these teachers were no doubt temporary immigrants from the Kuru-Panchāla country; but since the third and fourth chapters of the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka-Upanishad*, give an account of the philosophical discussions that actually took place in Mithilā, Bihar may well claim credit for having been the formulating ground of their philosophical theories. It is to be noted that they were often closely questioned by Janaka and quite possibly these chapters may have been composed in Videha. If the tradition that Kātyāgyana and Vararuchi were the same and that Vararuchi was the minister of the Nandas, then certainly the Vartikas were written in Bihar in *c.* 350 B.C.

Among the Epics, there is no doubt that the *Rāmāyaṇa* belongs to Eastern India; but U.P. had a greater share in its composition than Bihar. The present work is not earlier than 250 B.C., but there is no doubt that its nucleus goes back to this period. The *Rāmāyaṇa* represents a collection of Rāma ballads. Sītā belonged to Bihar and the state was famous for its minstrelsy. It is, therefore, quite probable that some parts of the epic were also preserved in Bihar, later to be modified and incorporated in the classical epic *Rāmāyaṇa*.

PĀLI AND ARDHAMĀGADHI

Having alluded briefly to Sanskrit, it is now necessary to refer to the Ardhamāgadhi and Pāli languages and literatures which flourished and developed in Bihar during this period mainly as the media of the two powerful religious schools of thought, namely, Jainism and Buddhism respectively. Bihar made solid contributions in the development of these two languages and it was through Pāli that India was eventually able to establish cultural ties with Ceylon, Burma and Siam.

The name Pāli comes from 'pra' and 'ali' and means the best line or sacred line of the holy literature of the Buddhists. The question of the original home of this language has been hotly discussed by scholars, some of whom hold the view that it must have been somewhere near Taxila, and that it bears close resemblance to the Paiśāci language as described by Prākṛit grammarians. But it is nearer the truth to say that it was a language current in Buddha's times in the country of Magadha or Bihar. It was called Māgadha,

though it was not identical with the Māgadhi described by Prākṛit grammarians. Buddhaghosa speaks of the language of the Buddhist scriptures as Māgadhi. Buddha preached his sermons in the language of the people of Rājgṛiha, Gaya, Vaiśālī and so on. In later times, Aśoka used for his edicts a language which bears a close resemblance to Pāli, which must have been a refined form of the original language current in Buddha's times.

The discourses of Buddha were handed down by oral tradition for some centuries, and were reduced to writing at a far later age. As the oral tradition was liable to considerable variation, both in wording and interpretation, soon after the Parinirvāṇa of the Master, the Buddhist monks met hurriedly at the Saptaparṇi cave near Rājgṛiha and recited their Master's discourses. They separated them into two broad divisions called Dhamma (religion) and Vinaya (discipline); the first contained his philosophical preachings and the other the code of discipline for the order of monks. The idea of *Abhidhamma*, or the third of the three Pītakas, came into existence much later. The two parts, Dhamma and Vinaya, were again recited at Vaiśālī a hundred years later, when the *Abhidhamma*, still formed no part. If the Bhabru Edict of Aśoka is an indication of the sacred literature of the Buddhists of his times, we may presume that several parts of the *Suttapitaka* had already become current. For Aśoka says in this edict that whatever Buddha has said is full of wisdom, which suggests that a collection of his discourses already existed at that time. He specially recommended a few specific passages for study by laymen, viz., (*i*) *Vinayasamukāsa* the essence of the Vinaya or code of discipline, which, according to some scholars, means the *Dharmachakra-pravartan Sūtra*, which now forms part of the *Mahāvagga* of the *Vinaya Pītaka*, and according to others, the *Atthavasavagga* which is now included in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*; (*ii*) the second passage mentioned in the edict is *Aliyavasāni*, or some ten important features of the holy life of a monk, identified with a part of the *Saṅgītisutta* of the *Dighanikāya* of the *Suttapitaka*; (*iii*) the third passage is called *Anagatabhayāni*, the dangers of degeneration among monks, a passage identified with sections 77-80 of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*; (*iv*) the fourth passage is called *Munigāthā*, and is to be indentified with the *Munisutta* of the *Suttanipāta*, now included in the *Khuddaka-nikāya*; (*v*) the fifth is called *Moneyāsutā* or *Moneyyasutta*, which forms part of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*; (*vi*) the sixth passage is called *Upatisapāsine*, the questions of *Upatissa*, to be identified with the

Sāriputtasutta of the *Suttanipāta* of the *Khuddaka-nikāya*; (*vii*) the last passage is called *Laghulorade* or the advice to Rāhula, particularly that portion of it which concerns his counsel regarding a deliberate lie, *sampajanamusavāda*, which is now identified with the sixtieth sutta of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

Although the age of Aśoka lies outside the period under review, the references in the above edict constitute unimpeachable authority of the existence of a Pāli literature current in his times, shows that the collection of Buddha's discourses was already in existence, and that both the *Vinaya Pitaka* and several parts of the *Sutta Pitaka* formed part of such a collection.

ARDHAMĀGADHI LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE BEFORE 325 B.C.

As with Buddha, Mahāvīra preached his doctrine in the language known to and used by the commoners. Scholars are divided in their opinion as to what language was used by Buddha for his preaching; but luckily for us we have no ground for doubt as to what language was used by Mahāvīra for his, for, the name stands recorded in the sacred literature of the Śvetāmbara Jainas as *Addhamāgaha*, i.e., Ardhamāgadhi. Hemachandra, the Prākṛit grammarian, terms *Ārśa*. This Ardhamāgadhi shares some but not all of the characteristics of Māgadhi Prākṛit as described by later grammarians. It is thus rightly called Ardhamāgadhi, which is the language understood by the people of Magadha as well as by the people of Mithilā and other countries on the borders of Magadha proper. Like the literature of the Buddhists, the discourses of Mahāvīra were transmitted by oral tradition and for a considerably longer period than Buddha's preachings. The present Ardhamāgadhi canon of the Śvetāmbara Jainas was reduced to writing at the time of Devardhi Gani in the fifth century of the Christian era. By this time, it had lost a good deal of the early canonical literature, and what was reduced to writing in Devardhi Gani's time was only fragmentary. To the Digambara Jainas, who did not admit the Śvetāmbara texts, belonged some works earlier than the 5th century A.D., but they were written in a Prākṛit dialect now called by scholars Jaina Sauraseni, which differs to a large extent from Ardhamāgadhi.

The Śvetāmbara Jaina canonical literature as handed down, contains relics of the original discourses of Mahāvīra, no doubt, but it also contains a good deal which is either modern or modernized. It appears that the division of this literature into 12 Aṅgas, 12

Upāṅgas, the Mūlasūtras and Chedasūtras was known from very early times, and the Acārāṅga, Sūtrakṛitāṅga, Uttarādhyayana contain a considerable portion which may go back to the earliest period. There are no records such as the Bhabru Edict of Aśoka to give us a clue to the contents of the early canonical literature which definitely goes back to the 4th century B.C. But it can safely be said that the division of the Jaina canon in Ardhamāgadhi on the lines of the *Tripiṭakas* of the Buddhists is quite old, and that the works mentioned above contain a good portion which goes back linguistically to the fourth century B.C.

D. Economic Conditions

During this period Bihar's economy was mainly agricultural. The territory to the east of the Gandak was probably still marshy and subject to floods while that to the west of it was fertile and had been brought under cultivation. This area as well as the Shahabad, Gaya, Patna, Hazaribagh, Monghyr and Bhagalpur districts, were the granaries of the province. Usually there was peasant proprietorship, and the areas owned by individual owners were small. The fields were divided into tiny pieces resembling the monk's robes made of many pieces of discarded cloth. There were, however, rich landlords like Kūtadanta, who had been assigned certain inhabited settlements by kings like Bimbisāra, and we occasionally come across merchants like Anāthapiṇḍa who owned entire villages.

Land taxation is only referred to in the *Dharma-Sūtras*. In theory it varied between 8 and 12 per cent and the king could assign his share to a minister, a courtier or a Brāhmaṇa. The lessee had to give half the yield of the field to the lessor and land could not be sold or parted with as gift.

Trade and industry had organized guilds to protect their interests and to facilitate large transactions. These had executives of their own and their members enjoyed considerable prestige both in public and at court. They were invited to the royal courts on ceremonial occasions and guild-chiefs were often installed in office by the kings themselves. The guilds settled both private and trade disputes of their members. We come across descriptions of fabulous wealth owned by such lay disciples of Buddha as Anāthapiṇḍa and Ānanda Gahapati which enable us to conclude that some of the

rich of those days buried half of their treasure, and lent out the rest at usury or invested it in trade. They had large fleets of ploughs and big herds of cattle and several hundred carts to transport their goods from place to place. Most of the trade of Bihar was internal but Vārānasi silks and brocades were imported for the use of the court and aristocracy.

Bihar had hardly developed any industries in the modern sense before 325 B.C. War was an incentive to industry then as now. The manufacture of bows, arrows, swords, lances and so on, was carried on on a large scale, especially after 400 B.C., when Magadha launched upon her imperial career. In the war with the Lichchhavis, Ajātaśatru is said to have won his victory by using two new weapons, 'Rathamusala' and 'Mahāśilākaṇṭaka'. The former probably had a sharp musala-like object (a long blade) attached to a chariot, and the latter was a catapult which threw heavy stones at the enemy forces. The manufacture of such weapons must have given rise to new industries.

Bihar's mineral wealth is great, but it had not yet been worked out scientifically during this period. There is no reference to the extraction of coal and iron. The tribes living in the iron-ore area may have extracted iron by primitive methods, as they did till recently, but our sources are silent upon the point. There was apparently a mine of precious stones somewhere near a hill not far from Patna. A breach of trust by the Lichchhavis about the equal division of its proceeds is said to have been one of the causes of the Magadha-Lichchhavi war of 485 B.C. Where exactly this hill was and what were the precious stones it contained, we do not know.

Spinning and weaving was a great industry of the age. Bihar, however, did not specialize in silks and muslins, which it usually imported from Vārānasi. The presence of a large number of elephants in the Himalayan regions gave an impetus to the ivory industry. Metal-work, carpentry, and the making of beads, jewellery and pottery had given rise to important semi-industrial callings. Excavations in the State have shown that this early pottery was both rough and fragile. Later on there came fine grey ware and from 400 B.C., Bihar, like other states, developed northern polished pottery. This is very smooth and glossy, its colours being black or golden or white. The secret of the gloss has been lost. It seems to have been very costly, for, broken pieces are often joined by copper riveting.

In big cities like Mithilā, the trades and industries were localized in different streets or mohallas, a practice still in vogue in our country.

The main articles of commerce were food-grains, oils, jewellery, perfumes, textiles and cattle. Goods were transported mostly on pack-animals; carts were used wherever there were good roads. Trade was carried on individually, in partnership and through guild organizations. Where there were no roads, caravans were guided by pilots (sthala-niyāmakas). In summer, the caravans moved at night. The halts had to be carefully selected with a view to the availability of fodder and water. If a caravan proposed to halt at a city, it was first interrogated and once its credentials were established it was afforded all facilities. Caravans often had guards to protect them on the way, and large cities, such as Mithilā, had their own store-houses.

The principal cities of the State, Rajgir, Gaya, Champā, Pāṭaliputra, Vaiśālī and Mithilā, were connected with one another by kachhā unbridged roads, as was the case with most of the ancient tracks everywhere. There were also routes connecting them with such important cities as Vārānasi, Kauśāmbī (Kosam), Śrāvastī (Sahet-Mahet) and Tāmralipti (Tamluk). The Gangā, the Son, the Sarayu and the Gandak offered cheap water transport, and the site of Pāṭaliputra, the new capital of the State, was selected primarily because it commanded river routes. Bihar also took part in maritime trade; Champā and Pāṭaliputra were ports from which boats sailed to Ceylon and Svarṇabhūmi (the Java-Sumatra area).

Urban life was not yet very developed. Ānanda thought that only two of the cities of Bihar, Rajgir and Champā, were large enough to deserve the honour of being the places for the Mahāprinirvāṇa (death) of Buddha. Vaiśālī, Mithilā and Gaya were also towns of antiquity and Pāṭaliputra was fast rising in importance and grandeur. The traditional description of Mithilā in the Jātakas shows that it had gates at its four cardinal points, watch-towers, a rampart and a moat. Ramparts were usually wooden as was the case at Pāṭaliputra. At Rajgir they were of stone, as it was available in adjoining hills in the required quantity. The cities usually had pleasure gardens and tanks. Suburbs extended beyond the gates at Rajgir, Mithilā and Vaiśālī.

Trade was usually by barter, but sometimes bullion was used. It was a long time before coinage came into existence. Golden

Nishkas (4 tolas in weight) and Śatamānas (one tola) are referred to in later Vedic literature, but no specimen has been recovered in Bihar or elsewhere. They must have existed however, for Pāṇini gives the prices of various articles as well as estimates of the property of the rich in Nishkas.

Bihar and U.P. seem to have been the two States where silver currency was started in 800 B.C. These early silver coins, which were known as Paṇas or Kārshāpaṇas, are now usually called punch-marked coins. They have four or five symbols on the obverse, among which the Sun, Six-armed-symbols, the Elephant, Bull, Dog with a pup, and Tank with fish, are noteworthy. These coins are irregular in shape and size but uniform in weight. During this period there seem to have been three weight standards, 40 rattis (70 grains), 32 rattis (56 grains) and 24 rattis (42 grains). The coins bear no legends or the names of the kings who issued them, or of the places of issue. It is therefore difficult to assign them to particular dynasties. Hoards of punch-marked coins have been found at Machhua-toli and Golakhpur in Patna, and at Goroghat and Patraha in the Monghyr district. The majority of them are Mauryan, but a small minority is pre-Mauryan. The Jātakas give the prices of articles in Paṇas or punch-marked silver coins.

Cast copper coins, square, rectangular or round in shape have been found in large numbers in Bihar. Probably some of them go back to this period. They also have only a symbol and no legend. Tree-in-railing, Hollow Cross, Crescented three-arched Hill, Svastika, and the Ujjaini-Symbol are important ones among them. It is not unlikely that this type was introduced in Bihar in the first place and that it later became popular in the adjoining states with the spread of Magadhan hegemony.

E. The Fine Arts

This age had not made much progress in fine arts and so far we have found very few relics of its art-objects.

The architecture of the age was mostly wooden, except at Rājgṛiha. At the latter place a cyclopean stone wall still surrounds the city (Pl. III, Fig. 9). Originally it was about 30 miles in length while it was twelve feet high and eighteen feet thick. It consists of undressed stones and these are so skilfully piled that even after a lapse of 3000 years, the wall still holds together at several places.

There were steps on the inner side to enable defenders to go to the top of the wall and there were huge bastions at intervals which must have served as watch towers. At a distance of 200 yards from the north gate of the old fort are the ruins of the 'New Fort' said to have been founded by Ajātaśatru. We have already referred to the Chaityas. They were something like open pavilions round the tree which was the object of worship. They were mostly wooden. The buildings erected for the Buddhist monks at Āmravana of Jīvaka in Rājgṛiha, at Mahāvana in Vaiśālī and at Jethvan in Śrāvastī also appear to have been open pavilions surrounded only by pillars with a few rooms on the second storey. The foundations of the Āmravana monasteries (Pl. IV, Figs. 10, 11) donated by Jīvaka at Rajgir also indicate that on the ground floor there were open halls with wooden pillars, probably protected by curtains when necessary.

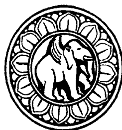
Stūpas that can be indisputably assigned to this period have not yet been discovered. They must have been small brick and mud structures surrounded by a wooden railing.

It was customary to raise them over the remains of kings. Eight stūpas were raised over the remains of Buddha also, but they were opened later by Aśoka, who wished to distribute the relics over a wider area. Funeral 'tumuli' over the remains of Brāhmaṇas, Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas are referred to in the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*; they too were probably mud and brick structures which have since perished. Four burial grounds, excavated in Lauriya in the district of Champaran, have been ascribed to the pre-Mauryan age.

So far we have found no remains of a palace of this period. They were probably built of earth, brick and wood, and so have not survived.

Sculpture had hardly made its appearance in Bihar during this period, for, image worship had not yet become popular in Chaitya shrines which were usually empty platforms under the main tree with no image. The Yaksha images, so common in Bhārhut and Sāñchī, came into fashion at a later period. There is a tradition that an image of Buddha was made in his own lifetime, but we cannot attach any value to it. Sculpture had made no progress in that age and naturally so, for, it is usually vitally related to cave structures, stone stūpas and temples, and these had hardly made their appearance at that time. The Saptaparṇi cave, where the first Buddhist Council was held at Rājgṛiha, was almost entirely a natural cavern. The Barābar caves belong to the next, i.e., the Mauryan age.

To sum up, the social and economic structure of Bihar during this period was more or less similar to that which existed in other parts of northern India. In the social sphere, however, she made two new experiments, one of giving freedom to women to become nuns and the other of launching a limited crusade against the caste system. The former experiment opened a new vista before women, and, in spite of the limitations imposed upon them, nuns seemed to have enjoyed their entry into a new sphere of life. That is quite clear from their songs in the *Theri-gāthās*. The permission given to all castes to enter the Buddhist Holy Order secured at least spiritual equality to all. In the realm of economic life, Bihar had started taking part in maritime activity and was perhaps one of the earliest states in ancient India to initiate silver and copper coinage. In the realm of Sanskrit literature, education and the sciences she had not made any very great progress, probably because Sanskrit culture entered late in the state. In the sphere of the fine arts also, her contribution was small, but this was the case with most of the other provinces.



VI

POLITICAL HISTORY AND ADMINISTRATION 325 B.C.—A.D. 320

THE MAURYAS
324—185 B.C.

MAHĀPADMA NANDA, the founder of the Nanda dynasty, had extended the boundaries of the Magadhan empire in all directions by putting an end to the ancient ruling dynasties of the Kurus, Madras, Śūrasenas, Ikshvākus and others. He had overrun Kaliṅga, and some portions of the Deccan may also have formed a part of his empire. Unfortunately, though his successors inherited this vast empire, they did not prove to be equal to the task. The last of the Nandas, Dhana Nanda, was popularly reputed to be intensely greedy and a hoarder of vast wealth. His large army had no doubt unnerved the world-conquering Macedonians, but it was a heavy strain on the people. Added to this was the prejudice that the Nandas were from an inferior caste.

Alexander's hurricane invasion had serious effects in north-west India. Most of the freedom-loving republican states fought stubbornly but were overpowered. Powerful kings, like those of Taxila and the Pūrus, were either forced to submit or were humiliated by military defeats. Alexander had left conquered Indian provinces not only in charge of subordinate powers such as Āmbhi and the elder Porus, but also under Greek generals and garrisons. The disunity of the country had resulted in the loss of independence of a large area which came under the sway of foreigners.

CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA

It was this national humiliation and popular discontent against the prevailing government of the Nandas that produced the man of the hour Chandragupta Maurya. It was he who freed the country

from the yoke of Greek servitude and established a united India under a government which covered the largest area ever till then embraced by one political authority. In place of the tyrannical rule of the Nandas, he gave the people a benevolent government and seriously attempted to set up a welfare state.

The early life of Chandragupta is not well known. According to a Burmese legend, after the destruction of Vaiśālī (Wethalic) by Ajātaśatru (Adaztathat), some of the princes of the republic escaped eastwards and founded the city of Maurya. But misfortunes followed them and they had to flee for safety. It was during this flight, that the wife of one of the princes came to Pāṭaliputra (Pouphaya), gave birth to a son and abandoned him in a neighbouring cowshed. This child grew up under the care of a cowherd, Chandra (Tsanda), and was called Chandragupta (Tsandagutta). Later, Chāṇakya (Dzanecka) came into contact with him and saw in him high promise of a bright future. Chāṇakya trained Chandragupta and left him a huge sum of money with which he raised an army to conquer the throne of Magadha.

This Burmese legend contains some grain of truth. That Chandragupta's early life was humble but adventurous appears more than likely. He must have passed his early years in Pāṭaliputra, which he later made the capital of his empire. Jaina tradition makes him the son of the daughter of 'Mayura-pośaka' (peacock tamer) who lived in an obscure village. Buddhist sources also connect the name 'Moriya' with 'mora' (peacock). It is impossible to vouch for the truth of any of these legends, but all point to a humble beginning for Chandragupta. It is probable that Chāṇakya came into contact with Chandragupta in the early years of his life. Buddhist tradition supports the story of *Mudrārākshasa*, that Chāṇakya, having been insulted by the last Nanda king, had resolved to uproot the dynasty and that he found in Chandragupta the necessary instrument towards this end. Later, Chandragupta studied under him at Takśaśilā (Taxila), an important seat of learning. Even in the time of Bimbisāra, Jīvaka had gone to Taxila to study. Chandragupta's completion of his education there coincided with Alexander's invasion of the Punjab. Plutarch informs us that, 'Andrakottas (Chandragupta), who was then a youth, saw Alexander himself and afterwards used to declare that Alexander could easily have taken possession of the whole country since the king (Nanda) was hated and despised by his subjects for the wickedness of his disposition and the meanness of

his origin.' Justin informs us that Chandragupta's insolent behaviour had angered Alexander (Alexandrum) who ordered him to be put to death, but he escaped!

With the exit of Alexander from India, the rebellious temper of the indigenous freedom-loving peoples was bound to seek more effective channels of expression. Chandragupta Maurya was not slow to take advantage of the prevailing temper against the Greeks, and, according to Justin, he encouraged Indians to overthrow Greek rule in the Punjab and the North-West. The unpopularity and instability of Greek rule and the weakness of the republican and monarchical Indian states that resulted from Alexander's invasion, made his task easier. The warlike people of forest tracts and republican communities swelled the ranks of Chandragupta's army of liberation and under his leadership, India east of the Indus shook off the yoke of Greek servitude. This successful war of independence under the leadership of Chandragupta may be dated *c.* 324-323 B.C. In the second partition of Alexander's empire in 321 B.C., there is no mention of India east of the Indus. It was only after becoming master of the military resources of the Punjab and the North-West Frontier that Chandragupta could march against the powerful army of Nanda, which comprised 2,00,000 infantry, 2,000 chariots, 20,000 cavalry and 3,000 or 4,000 elephants (Curtius Refus, Diodoros). Chandragupta recruited his soldiers from republican communities (Arattas), while the Greek soldiers who remained in India might have been the Yavanas and the Mlecchas who were ready to serve their new master. It is very likely that in marshalling all the available resources of the newly-liberated territories, and in recruiting as large and as efficient an army as he could raise in them for war against the Nandas, Chandragupta Maurya might have had to take recourse to various severe measures which were looked upon as oppressive by the inhabitants of that region. This may explain Justin's remark that, 'after his victory he forfeited by his tyranny all title to the name of "liberator" for he oppressed with servitude the very people whom he had emancipated from foreign thraldom.'

In the war against the Nandas, Chāṇakya or Kauṭilya played a leading part as a great strategist and diplomat. At first Chandragupta received a setback. From a later work, *Māhavaṁśatika,* we learn that his attempt to ignore the frontiers and his attack on the centre of the Nanda kingdom had ended in disaster. But he had learnt a lesson. He reduced the frontiers, set up garrisons there to

protect his rear, besieged Pāṭaliputra and defeated the Nanda king, who was either slain or put to flight. (Viśākhabatta's drama, *Mudrārākshasa*, tells the story of Chandragupta's success over the Nanda king, with Chāṇakya in the leading role.) The Purāṇas clearly mention that Chāṇakya uprooted the Nandas and placed Chandragupta on the throne. Kauṭilya in his *Arthaśāstra* claims to 'have rescued the scriptures, science of weapons and the earth which had passed to the Nanda king.' There is no reason to doubt the role of Kauṭilya in this revolution, especially as an adviser. The overthrow of the Nandas may be put at 323-322 B.C.

IMPERIAL EXPANSION

As a result of his victories over the Nanda king and the prefects of Alexander, the empire of Chandragupta extended from the Bay of Bengal to the Indus.

Chandragupta, however, maintained friendly relations with the Seleucid dynasty. It is significant that Chandragupta made no attempts to invade and conquer any territories outside India. It has never been the policy of Indian governments to enslave foreign peoples. Arrian (lst century A.D.), probably on the authority of Megasthenes, informs us that, 'a sense of justice, prevented any Indian king from attempting to conquer beyond the limits of India.' (McCrindle, p. 20). Chandragupta, after successfully repelling Seleucus's invasion, followed a peaceful foreign policy. There were even exchanges of presents and embassies between the two monarchs. Chandragupta sent to Seleucus presents, which included certain medicines and powerful aphrodisiacs. Seleucus sent Megasthenes as his ambassador to the Mauryan Court where the envoy had several interviews with Chandragupta. He wrote an account of India—*Indika*—only a few fragments of which survive.

Yet Chandragupta, while he maintained friendly relations with the neighbouring foreign kingdoms, was bent upon bringing the entire country under his rule. Plutarch tells us that he overran and subdued the whole of India with an army of 6,00,000 men. We learn from the Girnār inscriptions of Rudrādaman (2nd century A.D.) that in the west, Saurashtra formed a part of his empire. Mālwa (Avanti) may have been conquered by 313 B.C., which according to Jaina tradition, marks the beginning of his reign (perhaps in Avanti). His conquests of the Deccan and a part of south India are also indicated. Kauṭilya, the Prime Minister, refers to the

advantages of expansion in the Deccan. The author of *Mudrārākshasa* also suggests the supremacy of Chandragupta Maurya over the entire region from the Himālayas to the shores of the southern ocean (Dakshinārṇava). Tamil sources refer to Mauryan penetration as far as the Podiyil Hill in the Tinnevelly district. The leader of the movement was called Vamba Moriyar (Maurya upstart), a name applicable to Chandragupta, the first Maurya, who had risen from humble beginnings. According to Jaina legend, Chandragupta abdicated and passed his last days in religious austerity in Mysore. This is corroborated by two inscriptions found near Seringapatam dated A.D. 900. Another 14th century inscription mentions Chandragupta's rule over north Mysore. Aśoka had conquered only Kaliṅga but his empire included the whole of the Deccan and a part of South India up to the Pennar river in Nellore. Bindusāra cannot be credited with the conquest, for Tārānātha, the Tibetan historian, refers only to the revolt of the sixteen towns of the Deccan in his reign and his dealing successfully with it. In view of all this, it may be concluded that the Deccan and a part of South India were added to the Mauryan empire by Chandragupta himself. Chandragupta believed in the Brāhmaṇical religion and sacrifices, but according to Jaina tradition, which must not be rejected as being all legend, he was converted to Jainism. Along with Bhadrabāhu he abdicated in the midst of a great economic crisis caused by a severe famine, and retired to Shravana Belgola in Mysore where he spent his last days. Tibetan accounts about Chandragupta abdicating under advice from Kauṭilya in favour of his son may not be far from the truth, for the Brāhmaṇa Prime Minister might not have liked Chandragupta's conversion to Jainism. Chandragupta abdicated in *c.* 300 B.C. after a reign of twenty-four years.

Chandragupta Maurya's achievements are many and varied. He freed the country from foreign domination and brought about the largest degree ever of political integration of the vast country. His capital Pāṭaliputra excelled the royal cities of Ecbatana and Persepolis in beauty and splendour. He administered the country with remarkable efficiency and enforced exemplary discipline on the vast multitudes of his subjects, which was sometimes mistaken as oppressive rule. The benevolence of Chandragupta's administration is clear from Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*. It is also proved by the Girnār inscription of Rudradāman, which refers to the provision of irrigation facilities by the construction of Lake Sudarśana on Mount Virjayat

(Girnār). The lake was formed by damming the rivers flowing down the hill. This dam was built by Vaiśya Pushyagupta, provincial governor (Rāshtrīya) of Chandragupta Maurya. Indo-Greek cultural contacts flourished through exchanges between the Mauryan and the Seleucid empires. Foreign policy based on principles of mutual respect and understanding resulted in numerous foreigners settling down in India. Chandragupta himself led an active life. Besides his military campaigns, he often went out hunting and for 'vihāra-yātras', or for participating in festivities or religious sacrifices. He also amused himself by witnessing animal fights and wrestling bouts. Chandragupta respected philosophers and ascetics, and consulted them about public affairs. He led a hard life according to a rigorous time-table. He was careful about his personal safety. Women guards armed with weapons protected his person in the harem and while on hunting expeditions.

BINDUSĀRA

Chandragupta was succeeded by his son Bindusāra, who had to face rebellions in the North-West and in the Deccan. Aśoka, his son, was sent to quell the rebellion in Taxila, the capital of north-west India. Tārānātha, the Tibetan historian of the early 17th century, refers to the revolt of sixteen walled towns in the Deccan which Bindusāra, on the advice of Kauṭilya, successfully suppressed. As a result, the country from the eastern to the western seas became subject to him. Bindusāra continued the old friendly foreign policy and received envoys from the Hellenic kingdoms of Syria and Egypt. He requested Antimachus I to buy and send him sweet wine, dried figs and sophists; the Syrian monarch replied that he would send him figs and wine but 'sophists' in Greece were not a saleable commodity! This correspondence throws interesting light not only on Indo-Hellenic peaceful contacts but also on the aptitude and character of Bindusāra, who appears to have been a man of refined tastes.

AŚOKA

After a reign of 27 or 28 years, Bindusāra was succeeded by his son Aśoka in 273 B.C. Buddhist sources all agree that his coronation was delayed by about four years. This period is said to have been full of internal disturbances caused by wars of succession in which Aśoka came out successful after a considerable shedding of the blood of his relatives. There is nothing improbable in Aśoka, as a governor of

Ujjain, declaring himself king after the death of his father, defeating his eldest step-brother and assuming sovereignty over the Mauryan Empire. His coronation took place in 269 B.C.

THE CONQUEST OF KALIṄGA

Aśoka for the first thirteen years of his rule carried on the traditional Mauryan policy of territorial expansion at home. He attacked in 261 B.C. the kingdom of Kaliṅga which appears to have regained its independence during the revolution which had ended in the overthrow of the Nandas and the accession of Chandragupta Maurya. The kingdom of Kaliṅga was very wealthy due to trade with Burma and South-East Asia. Kaliṅga was famous for its ivory goods and its elephants, which were of great military value. Pliny refers to the army of Kaliṅga which consisted of 60,000 foot soldiers, 1,000 horsemen and 700 elephants. By the conquest of Bengal, including Tāmralipti, and the Deccan, Kaliṅga was almost encircled by Mauryan possessions on all sides except the east. But still the freedom-loving people of Kaliṅga fiercely resisted Mauryan aggression. Aśoka says in Rock Edict XIII, that in the Kaliṅga war one hundred and fifty thousand were captured, one hundred thousand slain and many times as many died from other causes.

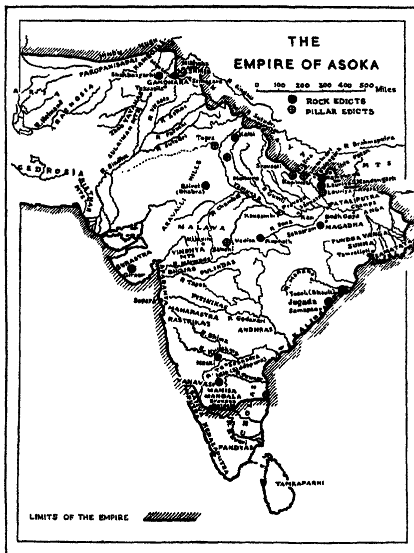
The conquest of Kaliṅga marks the last stage of Mauryan imperial expansion. The empire of Aśoka extended from Afghanistan and Baluchistan to Kaliṅga in the east and from the Himālayas to the River Pennar in the south. Kashmir and Nepal also formed parts of his empire. Chinese pilgrims and later literature refer to his sway over Kashmir and Bengal. Thus only Chola, Pāṇḍya, Sātiyaputra, Keralaputra, and Ceylon in the south and probably Kāmarūpa (Assam) in the east were outside his empire. According to legend, Khotan, outside India, was also within his sphere of influence and the people of Taxila established colonies there. Aśoka made no attempt to establish complete suzerainty over the whole of India in order to realize the ideal of 'the Chakravarti' of Kauṭilya's conception. He was struck with remorse (Pl. IX, Fig. 24) at the extent of killing and suffering that had been caused by the Kaliṅga war. It was as it were the last straw. He solemnly decided that he would be sorry even if one hundredth of that suffering were to be caused again. Thus he deliberately gave up the policy of waging aggressive wars even within the borders of India on the honest plea that it involved not only slaughter and misery to combatants but suffering

to innumerable peaceful citizens. He was moved by the fact that war disturbed the social and religious habits of the people and came in the way of the good life. This deep remorse led to inner conversion which was abiding. It was his hatred of war that made Aśoka declare that even if some people wronged him, he would bear all that could be borne. He specially declared his policy to the people dwelling in forest tracts (Ātavikas).

AŚOKA'S FOREIGN POLICY

The foreign policy of Aśoka was based not merely on the negative principle of 'no-war' declarations with all kingdoms within and outside India, but rather on the positive principle of promoting the welfare of the peoples of the whole world. Indian embassies abroad were expected to encourage non-injury to all beings, self-control, equable conduct and gentleness. In all border kingdoms, hospitals for men as well as animals were established, medicinal herbs were planted as well as imported. Wells and shady trees by roadsides were provided. Thus instead of territorial expansion and material gain, propagation of 'Dharma' and increasing international amity and welfare became the dominant motives of his foreign policy in the case of all bordering kingdoms and beyond, including Ceylon and the kingdoms of Antiochos II Theos of Syria, Ptolemy II Philadelphos of Egypt, Antigonos Gonatas of Macedonia, Magas of Cyrene and Alexander of Epirus. Both *Dipavaṁśā* and *Mahāvaṁśā* clearly state that Aśoka and Devānaṁpiya Tissa of Ceylon were great friends for a long time before Mahendra, son of Aśoka, went on a Buddhist mission there :—'For the two monarchs, Devānaṁpiya Tissa and Dhammaśoka already had been friends a long time, though they have never seen each other.' The king of Ceylon sent four envoys, including his nephew, and many retainers with costly presents to Aśoka. He gladly accepted these and sent in return numerous gifts, of every kind, including a young maiden, with the message that he had accepted Buddhism and that the king of Ceylon should also take refuge in Buddha. These epigraphic references to official embassies in Ceylon are corroborated by Ceylonese chronicles. But as there is no reference to Aśoka's official missions to the five Hellenic kingdoms of Syria, Egypt, Macedon, Epirus and Cyrene in the history of Buddhist missions, some scholars like Rhys Davids have doubts as to the veracity of the Aśokan edict. According to Rhys Davids, there are no grounds for believing that Aśoka sent missions

Map III


THE
EMPIRE OF ASOKA
0 100 200 300 400 500 Miles
ROCK EDICTS
PILLAR EDICTS
GANDHARA
PAROPANISADAI
ARACHOSIA
GEDROSIA
MALAWA
MAGADHA
PATALIPUTRA
ANGA
VINDHYA MTS
SURASTRA
BHOJAS
PULINDAS
PITINIKAS
MAHARASTRA
RASTRIKAS
ANDHRAS
VANAVASI
MAHISA MANDALA
KERALAPUTRA
PANDYAS
TAMRAPARNI
Jugada
Samapa
Tosali (Dhauli)
R. Godavari
R. Bhima
R. Tapti
R. Narmada
R. Sona
Kausambi
Sanchi
Vedisa
Girnar
Sopara
Tamralipti
SUMHA
ARAVALLI HILLS
Bairat (Bhabra)
Kalsi
Topra
Sravasti
R. Sindhu
SULAIMAN MTS
Shahbazgarhi
Takssila
LIMITS OF THE EMPIRE

to these lands, and that it is improbable that the Hellenic peoples accepted Buddhism at the behest of the 'Barbarian' emperor of India. Rhys Davids dismisses the declaration of Aśoka regarding the success of his religious propaganda in the five Hellenic kingdoms as 'mere royal rodomontade'. But this may be a hasty judgement. We know that the Seleucid monarchy of Syria, and Ptolemaic Egypt, had diplomatic relations with India at the time of Chandragupta Maurya and Bindusāra. There is nothing extraordinary in Indian official missions being established in Hellenic kingdoms. It was natural that Aśoka, after his own change of heart owing to the Kaliṅga war, should have directed his officers in the empire and abroad to take up the propagation of Dharma and service to all living beings as their prime duty. We must not imagine that the ancient cultured Greeks were impervious to the finer elements in Indian culture. Moreover, the Dharma that Aśoka advocated was not sectarian or ritualistic in character. It was just a way of life based on moral and ethical principles which would always be respected by all peoples at all times.

The Kaliṅga war did not only revolutionize the foreign policy of Aśoka but also deeply affected his internal policy. It transformed his entire personality and perspective. Originally he was a believer in Brāhmaṇism and used to make lavish gifts to that religion. But after the Kaliṅga war, nine years after his coronation, he became a convert to Buddhism. It appealed to him most as a soothing balm for his anguished soul. He then paid a visit to Sambodhi (Bodh Gaya) and introduced 'dharma-yātras' in place of 'vihāra-yātras' which involved hunting and other sports. In the twelfth year of his reign he visited Lumbini village, the birthplace of Buddha, and offered worship there. He lived with the Saṅgha (Buddhist Saṅgha) for more than a year and began to exert himself zealously for the propagation of Dharma. The Bhabru edict opens with a declaration of faith in Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha. His interest in the welfare of Buddhist Saṅgha is clear from the fact that he declared in the Sārnāth Pillar inscription that whoever broke the Saṅgha would be punished and expelled. Buddhist tradition is of an unanimous opinion that Aśoka was converted to Buddhism and that he visited Buddhist holy places. He built 84,000 stūpas and vihāras throughout Jambudvipa (India), including the Aśokāśrama at Pāṭaliputra. He convened the Third Buddhist Council, under the presidentship of Moggaliputta Tissa at Pāṭaliputra, to end the confusion in the

Saṅgha caused by many heresies. The Council expelled followers of the false doctrine and firmly established 'Theravāda'. Moggaliputta Tissa set forth the treatise belonging to 'Abhidhamma' which is called *Kathāvathu*. Thus the unity of the Church was established and 'a similar punishment, a similar destruction of an opposite doctrine never occurred.' To propagate Buddhism, Moggaliputta Tissa sent missions under capable leaders to different parts of the country from Pāṭaliputra. Of course, these missions must have been patronized by Aśoka and made possible by his lavish gifts to the Saṅgha; but these were purely religious missions organized by the religious body, and not official or royal missions.

PROPAGATION OF BUDDHISM

Aśoka had turned Buddhist no doubt, but he was not so much concerned with the sectarian form of Buddhism as with its inspiring humane spirit. The principles which he propagated through his edicts for the acceptance of the people and his officers do not even mention the Four Noble Truths, the Middle Path and Nirvāna, the most important Buddhist articles of faith. Aśoka was in fact more profoundly touched and impressed by the robust optimism of Buddha that each man had the key to his own salvation, and that key was the ethical life and the freedom from desire. The 'Dharma' that Aśoka preached called upon people to lead a 'righteous life'. This would ensure material prosperity as well as heaven. The contents of Aśoka's Dharma were :—(*a*) proper respect to parents, teachers and elders; (*b*) proper treatment of slaves and servants by masters; (*c*) liberality to friends, companions and relations; (*d*) generosity towards Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas; (*e*) promotion of the essential elements of all religions and mutual religious understanding; (*f*) non-injury to living beings; and (*g*) moderation in income and expenditure. Eschew violence, cruelty, anger, pride and jealousy which are obstacles in the way of a righteous life, was his exhortation. The people were asked to develop virtues like kindness, truthfulness, liberality and purity. Thus Aśoka's Dharma sought to make everyone virtuous and to usher in an era of family integration, social and economic co-operation, mutual understanding between different groups, peace among religions, and international fellow-feeling among nations. It is immaterial whether this Dharma is called 'Rājadharma' or 'Buddhism' or 'Sanātana Dharma'. It is a religion which is non-dogmatic and non-sectarian. Aśoka, the

great humanist, genuinely interested in the total welfare of all, naturally drew immensely upon the pragmatic and rational 'way' shown by Buddha.

Aśoka says that, for many hundreds of years such abuses as the slaughter of animals, unseemly behaviour to relatives, Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas, *disobedience to parents* and the aged, and condemnation of other religions, had been increasing. Aśoka saw in this a grave peril to the individual and to society. He decided to re-establish respect for fundamental, moral and social virtues and values. He himself led a highly righteous life. He gave up his pleasure tours. He believed in mass contact—in meeting personally people of the countryside (jānapadasya janasya darśanam). He gave gifts to Brāhmaṇas as well as Śramaṇas. His solicitude for members of his own family, his brothers, sisters, servants and harem was expressed in concrete terms. The slaughter of animals and birds in the royal kitchens was at first reduced to a minimum of two peacocks and a deer, but later even this was stopped. He looked upon his subjects as his children and showed humane kindness towards the aged, the sick, the helpless and even towards prisoners condemned to death or long-term imprisonment. He was the hardest-worked man in the country, ready to receive persons who came for state business practically at all times and at all places. Thus Aśoka himself followed the Dharma which he wanted people to follow. 'He did not apply to others any precept which he would not apply to himself. Thus he tried to stand as a living example of virtue to his own officers and subjects' (Barua).

For the propagation of Dharma, Aśoka engraved its principles on rocks and pillars distributed throughout his dominion. He decided to use state machinery too for the purpose of propagating Dharma among the people. The Mantriparishad was to inculcate the spirit of Dharma in subordinate officers like the Yuktas. These, together with the Rājukas, and Prādeśikas, were to take up the propagation of Dharma as an additional duty while on tour on state business. A special class of officers, the Dharma-mahāmātras were created to devote themselves exclusively to the promotion of Dharma. The slaughter of animals for religious sacrifices was prohibited and all such socio-religious gatherings where meat-eating and other indulgences were rampant, were banned. The killing of animals and birds was strictly regulated and certain species were not to be killed at all. Certain unreasonable ceremonies (maṅgalas) based on superstitious beliefs,

generally practised by women during sickness, marriage, birth of sons, and on journeys, were discouraged. In their place, 'Dharma-maṅgala' consisting of seemly behaviour towards the servant and menial classes, reverence towards preceptors, compassion for animals and liberality to Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas were commended as highly meritorious. In order to encourage people's faith in following Dharma, Aśoka organized many shows in which representations of heavenly bliss were shown to the people to impress on them the rewards which they would enjoy by following Dharma.

Aśoka laid the greatest stress on mutual respect among all religious sects. This was very necessary in a land of diverse religions and sects, if a peaceful atmosphere for the growth of the moral and material happiness of the people was to be maintained. Aśoka proclaimed that no one should abuse or condemn the religion of others for the simple reason that the essence of all religions was the same. He emphasized the essence and not the forms of religion, which may be different. He declared the great truth that, 'one who honours his own faith and condemns another's through attachment to his own, and in order to give greater importance to his own faith, in reality by so doing, injures more assuredly his own faith.' On the other hand, he said, 'other faiths should be honoured on this and that occasion. By doing so, one promotes one's own faith and benefits another's faith as well.' Thus, mutual respect for another's faith was to be an integral part of every religion. He wanted everyone to realize that one's faith in one's own Dharma should induce one to respect others' Dharma as well. He laid the greatest stress on 'Samavāya', concord, in everything. As a practical administrator, he had realized that the greatest danger to religious peace and understanding was a loose tongue. Therefore he called upon members of different faiths to exercise restraint in speech concerning religious matters. He also recommended inter-religious and inter-sectarian conferences where people of different faiths would learn about one another's Dharma. People were advised to study the texts of different religions, which would bring home to them the essential unity of all religions, and would make them appreciate other religions. For the growth of harmony and mutual appreciation among all sects, Aśoka employed Dharma-mahāmātras, Superintendents of Women's Apartments (Striyadhyaksha-mahāmātras), and Superintendents of Ranches (Vraja bhaumikas) and other officials. It is

noteworthy that Aśoka appreciated the importance of such work being done by women, who are by nature of a peaceful disposition and are able to influence generations of men as mothers, wives and sisters. He also proclaimed that followers of all sects may dwell in all places without distinction. Aśoka was largely satisfied by the success of his efforts. Apart from success, the efforts themselves will ever remain an inspiring monument to the noble cause of the religion of humanity.

AŚOKA'S PLACE IN HISTORY

Aśoka occupies a unique place in the annals of recorded history. Among kings and conquerors, his is the solitary example of the giving up of the policy of aggressive militarism in the wake of a resounding victory. By devoting himself to the organization of all the resources of the State for the promotion of the welfare of humanity, Aśoka set an ideal for posterity to follow. His emphasis on the oneness of essence in all religions and common principles of ethical conduct, together with his constant efforts to bring about religious harmony and understanding between followers of different faiths has even today an irresistible appeal. His place in Buddhism is second only to that of Buddha. Under his active patronage, Buddhism spread not only throughout India but to Ceylon, Nepal, Burma, West Asia and probably to Khotan, in Central Asia. In his administration, he introduced a positive humane element and inspired the bureaucracy with the noble mission of devoted service to the people at large. The monuments of Aśoka — the free standing pillars, with characteristic lustrous Mauryan polish — will ever remain glorious examples not only of good Indian art but also of his efforts for the propagation of Dharma. Last but not least, Aśoka stands pre-eminent as the prophet of true internationalism based on law, love, mutual self-respect and understanding.

LATER MAURYAS AND THE DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE

The history of the Mauryas after the death of Aśoka is not clearly known. Paurāṇic, Buddhist and Jaina sources give their own versions about the successors of Aśoka. The Kashmiri historian Kalhaṇa and the Tibetan scholar Tārānātha have different tales to tell. It appears that Aśoka had many sons, some of whom carved out for themselves independent kingdoms like Vīrasena in Gāndhāra and Jalauka in Kashmir. In Pāṭaliputra, Aśoka was succeeded by his

grandsons Daśaratha and Samprati. Daśaratha dedicated caves to the Ājīvikas on Nāgārjuni (Barābar) hills near Gaya. Samprati was a Jaina who did a lot for the spread of Jainism. The next important king was Śāliśūka who was probably a brother of Samprati. He was a bad soul and a lover of intrigues (dushtātma and priyavigrah). In the name of religion, he followed an irreligious policy of spreading Jainism even by force. Such a rule must have caused wide dissatisfaction. The Maurya dynasty was further discredited by the Bactrian-Greek invasion of Madhyadeśa and Magadha. Ultimately the commander-in-chief of the Mauryan army, Pushyamitra, assassinated Bṛīhadratha, the last Mauryan king, and thus ended the rule of the Mauryas in 185 B.C.

What were the causes of the downfall of the Mauryan empire? Some scholars have held the religious and ethical policy of Aśoka responsible. According to them, his efforts to spread Buddhism, his order banning animal sacrifices, the usurpation of the Brāhmaṇas' functions by Dharma-mahāmātras and the abolition of the privileges of the priestly class, alienated the Brāhmaṇas. They conspired to end this dynasty whose rulers were patrons of Buddhism, Jainism and other heretical sects. The leader of the conspiracy was the Brāhmaṇa Pushyamitra Suṅga who staged a *coup d'état.* But this view does not appear to be plausible because Aśoka had done nothing against the Brāhmaṇas as a class; as a matter of fact, he always showed favour to Brāhmaṇas and other heretical sects. In his edicts he mentions Brāhmaṇas first and then others. The ban on animal sacrifice was not against the spirit of Upanishadic teaching and there were no definite judicial privileges for the priestly caste. The Dharma-mahāmātras were not recruited from amongst the non-Brāhmaṇas alone. They were employed from among the Brāhmaṇas also and they often advised different sections of the people to show liberality towards the Brāhmaṇas. It is difficult to believe that there was anything in the policy of Aśoka to cause resentment among the Brāhmaṇas as a class.

Aśoka, most certainly followed a policy of international peace and no-war and exhorted his sons and grandsons to do the same. But there is no evidence to show that he demobilized the army and neglected its training and recruitment. A period of peace is not necessarily a period of military weakness. It must be remembered that the dynasty continued to rule for more than 50 years after the death of Aśoka. This is hardly explainable if we believe that there was gross

military neglect as a result of his pacific policy. As a matter of fact, even if Aśoka and his successors had followed a continuous expansion policy, the empire may have disintegrated as did the empires of the Guptas, the Turko-Afghan, and the Moghals. What is really very astonishing is that in those days of difficult communication, the Mauryan empire continued for more than 125 years!

The dismemberment of the Mauryan empire can be better explained by the interplay of natural forces. The history of India down to the establishment of British rule in the middle of the 19th century, bears witness to the alternate success of integrating and disintegrating forces. The vastness of the empire, coupled with undeveloped communications, made it impossible for the central authority to maintain its hold throughout the length and breadth of the country. The spirit of regionalism was bound to raise its ugly head and central control could not always be effective. During the Mauryan period, there were many provincial rebellions mainly against the misrule of provincial ministers and officers. Aśoka himself, as a prince, had to deal with a rebellion in the province of Gāndhāra. As an emperor he was not happy with the state of affairs in the newly conquered province of Kaliṅga. He rebuked the officers for maladministration and miscarriage of justice and threatened to send imperial Mahāmātras every five years for supervision and inspection. He asked the viceroys of Ujjain and Taxilā to send Mahāmātras on tour every three years to see that the people in their territories were not harassed.

It has already been seen that the worst enemies of ruling dynasties have been the royal princes themselves. Like crabs they have a tendency to eat their own begetter. The royal princes were appointed viceroys, and one of them, probably the eldest, became the Yuvaraja or heir-apparent. Some of the royal princes posted in distant provinces as governors, tried to carve for themselves an independent principality as soon as they found a weak king on the throne. The history of the Turko-Afghan and Moghal dynasties is well known. We know that Jalauka, a son of Aśoka, declared himself independent king of Kashmir, not long after his father's death. Vīrasena, another son or grandson of Aśoka, announced himself as an independent ruler in Gāndhāra. According to *Divyāvadāna*, the Yuvaraja of Aśoka conspired with the Chancellor Rādhāgupta against the king. No wonder that the Mauryan empire immediately after the death of Aśoka began to disintegrate and the initiative to be taken by vain and ambitious royal princes.

Chandragupta and Aśoka had kept ministers and high officers under check and close inspection, but under their weak successors these officers who were ambitious began to usurp real power from weaker hands. The quick succession of eight or ten rulers within a short space of fifty years further enhanced the power of experienced ministers and high officers. This inevitably brought into play rivalry for power between ambitious officers, who began to form their own groups. We know that during the last years of Mauryan rule, there were factions in the capital, one led by Pushyamitra, the Commander-in-Chief of the army, and the other by the Minister; the former managed to make his son Viceroy of Vidiśā while the latter gave his son-in-law the governorship of Vidarbha. It appears that Pushyamitra Śuṅga finally imprisoned the Minister and then feeling safe, staged a *coup d'état*. There is strong suspicion that the later Mauryan kings had lost touch with the army; otherwise, Pushyamitra Śuṅga could not have killed king Bṛīhadratha, as the story goes, in front of the army on parade.

During this period of internal weakness, foreigners were only too ready to fish in troubled waters. Antiochus III of Syria had crossed the Hindukush in 206 B.C. and received presents from Subhāgasena, the king of Gāndhāra. India appears to have lost territories west of the Indus soon after to the Bactrian king, Euthydemos, whose son Demetrios invaded India and occupied Śākala or Śiālkot, which he named after his father. He marched into the heart of the country, invaded Panthala, Sāketa and Mathurā and even reached Pāṭaliputra. This Bactrian-Greek invasion under Demetrios took place soon after the reign of Śāliśūka. From the Yuga Purāṇa section of *Gaya Sacuhita*, probably a work of the first century B.C., we learn that Pāṭaliputra was besieged and a big battle fought in which weapons of siege, such as engines or trunks of trees on wheels were used to break through the mud fortifications of the city. The Greek writer Apollodorus, as quoted by Strabo says that, 'those who came after Alexander advanced beyond the Hypanies (Beas) to the Ganges and Pāṭaliputra.' According to Taru, Demetrios's invasion and conquest of India must have taken place after 187 B.C. If we place this event earlier, then either the invasion of Demetrios should be placed earlier in 190 B.C. or the *coup d'état* of Pushyamitra placed later than 187 B.C., say in 185 B.C. This disintegration of the Mauryan empire was hastened by foreign invasion and Pushyamitra gave it the finishing stroke. Recent archæological excavations at

Kumhrār have shown that the Mauryan pillared hall containing characteristic Śuṅga sculptures and pottery, was broken and set on fire before the Śuṅga period is reached. This tends to corroborate the account of the Yuga Purāṇa of the great battle fought in the city against Greeks who might have destroyed Mauryan buildings and monuments.

It may thus be concluded that external and internal causes, rather than the pacifist policy of Aśoka, brought about the final disintegration of the Mauryan empire.

THE ŚUṄGAS
185—75 B.C.

The Mauryan Commander-in-Chief Pushyamitra founded the Śuṅga dynasty. Very soon after seizing the throne, Pushyamitra performed the horse-sacrifice at which Patañjali, the author of the *Mahābhāshya* is believed to have acted as a priest. The latter remembered the Yavana (Greek) attack on Sāketa (Ayodhyā) and Mādhyamikā (near modern Chitto) as recent events. Pushyamitra's rule over Sāketa is proved by the Ayodhyā inscription. The Bactrian Greeks had retreated from Madhyadeśa because of the outbreak of civil war in their homeland. The Śuṅga authority over Madhyadeśa was then established. Eastern Mālwa with its capital at Vidiśa was under the Śuṅgas with Agnimitra as Viceroy. Yājñasena, partisan of the Mauryan Sachiva, was hostile to the Śuṅgas, and war broke out between Vidiśa and Vidarbha. Ultimately the kingdom of Vidarbha was divided between Agnimitra's protégé, Mādhavasena, and Yājñasena, the latter acknowledging Śuṅga suzerainty. The dominion of Pushyamitra now extended to the river Narmadā.

Pushyamitra came into conflict with the Greeks again. We know from the drama *Mālavikāgnimitram* that Vasumitra, the grandson of Pushyamitra, defeated a Greek army on the southern bank of the Sindhu, though the exact location of the place is not known. Pushyamitra invaded Śākala, the capital of the Bactrian Greeks. He is said to have met his death at the hands of a Yaksha, who may have been a Bactrian Greek. Soon Śākala was reoccupied by Menander, a younger contemporary of Pushyamitra Śuṅga.

The reign of Pushyamitra Śuṅga is significant. He performed two Aśvamedha sacrifices. This Vedic sacrifice was in abeyance and there is no reference to such a sacrifice in Bihar since the

beginning of the Buddhist era. But though Pushyamitra Śuṅga was a believer in Vedic Brāhmaṇism, there is no compelling evidence to dub him as a persecutor of Buddhism. Buddhist literature of a later period certainly regards him as a great enemy of Buddhism but this was probably because he had overthrown the Mauryan dynasty and had revived Vedic sacrifices. The story of Pushyamitra's unsuccessful attempt to destroy the Kukkuta-ārama Monastery at Pāṭaliputra is hardly credible as evidence of the policy of persecution of Buddhists by Pushyamitra, because we know that the famous Buddhist stūpas of Bhārhut and Sāñchī with their typical railings were erected during his reign.

Pushyamitra was succeeded by his son Agnimitra. According to the Purāṇas, he was followed by eight other kings namely Sugestha, Va(Sumitra), Odraka, Pulindaka, Ghoshā, Vajramitra, Bhāga-(vata) and Devabhuti. Copper coins of one Agnimitra have been found in Ahichhatra (Pañchāla). Coins of Dhruva-Mitra Sūrya-Mitra, Phālguni Mitra, Bhānu-Mitra, Bhadraghosha, Bhumimitra, Jayamitra and Indra-Mitra are found among the groups of the Pānchāla series. Bhadraghosha has been identified by some scholars with the 7th Śuṅga king, Ghoshā. But as a matter of fact, except Agnimitra none of the Pānchāla Mitra kings are common to the Paurāṇic list of the Śuṅgas. Indramitra the Pañchāla, may or may not be the Raja Indrāgnimitra of Bodh Gaya railing inscriptions; but it is not necessary that he should have ruled over Magadha. Kings of different regions are known to have made religious endowments of buildings and other things beyond the borders of their kingdom. The Pañchāla group of rulers should be regarded as a local dynasty not necessarily connected with the Śuṅgas. The same may be said of the Mitra kings whose coins are found in Ayodhyā, Mathurā and Kauśāmbī. At any rate, their connexion with the Śuṅga dynasty of Magadha and Vidiśa is extremely uncertain. The ninth Śuṅga king Bhāgavata (according to some, the fifth king Odraka), received the Greek ambassador Heliodoros from the court of Antialcides of Taxila. The last Śuṅga king, Devabhuti, was murdered by the Brāhmaṇa minister Vāsudeva Kāṇva in *c*.75-72 B.C. Thereafter Śuṅga power continued in some pockets.

THE KĀṆVAS
75—30 B.C.

The Purāṇas assign a reign of 45 years to the Kāṇvas, the founder

Vāsudeva being given 9 years. The Kāṇva rule in Magadha was not peaceful. It was either in the reign of Vāsudeva or his son Bhūmimitra that Khāravela, king of Kaliṅga, invaded Magadha twice. It appears that Khāravela had come to the throne of Kaliṅga 300 years after Nandarājā in about 70 B.C. In the eighth year of his reign, he stormed Gorathagiri (Barābar hills near Gaya) and put heavy pressure on the people of Rājgṛiha. In the twelfth year, he again invaded Magadha, terrorized the people of Magadha and Aṅga (East Bihar) and compelled Bahasatimita to bow down at his feet. Bahasatimita was probably a local ruler, who might have represented the remnant of the Śuṅga power in Magadha. Many scholars led by Jayaswāl have identified Bahapatimitum or Bahasatimitam in the Hāṭhigumpha inscription of Khāravela, with Pushyamitra Śuṅga, the king defeated by Khāravela. The identification cannot stand critical scrutiny. Moreover scholars like R. C. Majumdar and Dr Allen have doubted the existence of such a word as Bahapatimitam in the inscription at all. The Kānva dynasty came to an end in about 30 B.C.

The political history of Bihar from the end of the Kāṇva dynasty to the rise of the Gupta dynasty is very obscure. Though the Purāṇas clearly say that the Āndhras would overthrow the Kāṇva and whatever remained of the Śuṅga power, there is no evidence at all to suggest that the Āndhras or the Sātavāhanas ever ruled over Magadha. Local rulers appear to have exercised authority here and there. Kings Indrāgnimitra and Brāhmamitra of the Bodh Gaya railing inscriptions may be placed in this region though their identification with Indramitra and Brāhmamitra, who issued coins, is very uncertain.

THE KUSHĀNAS

Towards the end of the 1st century A.D., Bihar experienced the Kushāna thrust. The reference to the Śāka rulers of the Madhyadeśa in the *Gārgi Saṁhitā* may be about some of the Śāka-Kushāna governors of Madhyadeśa. Though there is epigraphic evidence to suggest that eastern India up to Vārānasi was under the Kushānas by the third year of Kaniska's reign and was governed by Mahākshatrapa Kharapattana and Kshatrapa Vanashpara, there is no positive evidence of the Kushāna conquest of Magadha, in spite of strong suspicions in that direction. Chinese and Tibetan legends attribute to Kaniska the conquest of Sāketa and Pāṭaliputra and mention

that Aśvaghosha was taken away from Pāṭaliputra by Kaniska. A hoard of Kushāna coins from the time of Wema Kadphises II to Vāsudeva has been found at Buxar. A coin of Hinvishka was found near Vajrāsana in Bodh Gaya by Cunningham. Kushāna coins have been found in Vaiśālī, Kumhrār in the year 1956 in Patna excavations. Kushāna coins have been found in some districts of Bengal as well. It is true that coins are very handy and do not necessarily prove that the region in which they are found was under those particular rulers. Yet a big hoard, consisting say of cheap copper coins as in the Buxar hoard, would suggest that those coins were current and in circulation. In recent excavations in Kumhrār, a large number of terra-cottas in Mathurā-red sandstone and with characteristic Kushāna features and dress has been found. All these certainly suggest, though they do not prove, the Kushāna occupation of Bihar.

But Kushāna rule was short-lived, and when the Nāgas, Kulindas, Yaudheyas and others began their war of liberation against Kushāna rule, Bihar could hardly remain a Kushāna province for long. But what dynasties were ruling in Bihar at that time is anybody's guess. The Lichchhavis appear to have re-emerged as a political power in the region. From the Nepalese inscription of Jayadeva II (8th century A.D.), it appears that his ancestor Supushpa Lichchhavi, the 23rd predecessor of Jayadeva I (A.D. 330-355), was born at Pushpapura (Pāṭaliputra). Supushpa may be placed in the first century A.D. at the latest. Of course, it does not prove Lichchhavi rule over Pāṭaliputra but shows its connexion with the city. In Magadha, Jayaswāl places a Kota dynasty which he identifies with the Magadha-Kula of the *Kaumudī Mahotsava* drama. But this theory is based on very meagre evidence. The Magadha-Kula is never mentioned as the Kota dynasty in the drama and the historicity and the date of the play are matters of controversy among scholars. The possibility of the rule of the Maukharis cannot be rejected outright. They appear to have been an important people here even before the Christian era. A seal of the Maukharis in early Brāhmi script was found near Gorathagiri (Barābar hills), and local Maukhari dynasties appear to have been ruling in this region, though much later.

However, the veil of oblivion is lifted only after the ascendancy of the Gupta dynasty by the beginning of the 4th century A.D. when King Chandragupta I assumed the imperial title in A.D. 319-320.

MAURYAN ADMINISTRATION

The main sources for the study of the Mauryan administration are (a) the accounts of the contemporary Greek ambassador, Megasthenes, and other classical scholars, (b) Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, and (c) the inscriptions of Aśoka. Megasthenes's book 'Indica' is lost but a few fragments of it have been preserved in quotations in the writings of later classical scholars. Strabo, Arrian, Ktesis have largely drawn on the account of Megasthenes. Though his account is valuable as a contemporary document, the Greek ambassador does not appear to have possessed sound critical sense and was naturally interpreting Indian ideas and institutions to Greeks in a Greek background and thus may have lost sight of the spirit and form of Indian political and social organizations. This makes his account largely superficial and inaccurate. Scholars have debated the age and authenticity of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*; but no argument for placing it much later than the Mauryan period is convincing enough to reject the unanimous and persistent Indian tradition that Kauṭilya had helped Chandragupta's rise to power and had written a book on polity for his disciple's guidance. The socio-religious background and data of the *Arthaśāstra* certainly point to a date earlier than *Manusmṛiti*. The references to Vedic gods and social customs such as levirate (niyoga) and widow re-marriage are significant. We have accepted Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* as by and large an anthoritative source for the study of Mauryan polity, though there may have been some interpolations here and there. The inscriptions of Aśoka throw considerable light on the spirit and the ideals of Mauryan administration and on the administrative reforms introduced by him.

THE KING AND HIS MINISTERS

The king was not only the formal head of the empire but the actual directing head of the government. Kauṭilya has described the following as the seven essential elements of a sovereign kingdom: the king, the minister, the country, the fort, the treasury, the army and the friend. The king here heads the list, because the progress or downfall of other elements depends upon the king. The supreme importance of the king in the body-politic was recognized because he 'supplied the motive-power to the whole system'. The proper enforcement of 'Varṇāśrama Dharma' the basis of the socio-religious order, depended on the king. The maintenance of law and order and the prevention of anarchy was the king's responsibility. Naturally, therefore, during the

Mauryan period there was not only an enormous increase of royal power, but it was highly eulogized. The king appointed ministers and other officials and kept himself informed of all affairs through confidential spies. The 'overseers' or spies were so numerous that Megasthenes mentioned them as a distinct class of citizens. The king gave particular attention to the worship of the gods and the activities of heretics, Brāhmaṇas learned in the Vedas, of cattle, of sacred places, of minors, of the aged, the afflicted, the helpless and of women. The king kept under his own control the finance, the army, the conduct of foreign policy and the planning of military moves. He was the fountain of justice and law. Besides setting up different grades and types of courts, he himself tried cases in the open court. Megasthenes informs us that for the purpose of judging cases promptly Chandragupta sat sometimes the whole day in the court, even while his body was being massaged by four attendants. Though the king was more an enforcer of law as laid down by the Vedas, the Smṛiti, equity and custom, than a law-maker, his decisions on contentious points of law or on administrative regulations in various fields gave him quasi-legislative authority as well. The orders of the king controlled the market, fixed prices, standardized weights and measures, regulated working in factories, controlled the activities of artisans, labourers, traders, merchants and even ascetics. Aśoka's edicts even attempted to direct a citizen's religious attitude and socio-economic norms. Thus the Mauryan king had practically all-embracing authority which gave monarchy a monolithic character.

But the king himself was not an autocrat or a tyrant. He was given proper education in history, religion, politics, economics, and military science and practice. He was taught the supreme value of discipline and was exhorted to give up lust, anger, greed, vanity, haughtiness and jubilation. This gave him control over his senses. Such a properly educated and disciplined king was hardly likely to play the tyrant especially when he was expected to live up to the high ideal of dedicating his life to the service of the people. Kauṭilya declared, 'In the happiness of his subjects lies his happiness, in their welfare his welfare; whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as his good but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good.' Chandragupta worked very hard and followed a rigorous time-table. Aśoka even went further and declared that messengers might report the people's business to him at all hours and places. He

regarded his subjects as his children and took parental care in their material and spiritual welfare. This attitude towards his subjects was expressed not with a view to emphasize Aśoka's power over helpless subjects but to demonstrate and carry out his sincere policy to promote the spiritual and material happiness of his people. Of course, the practice of this ideal inevitably made Mauryan monarchy an institution of comprehensive competence. Public opinion was never ignored. Kauṭilya clearly warns the king not to make himself inaccessible to his people causing thereby public disaffection. He cites examples of bad kings coming to grief and emphasizes the danger of public fury. The improper use of royal authority to punish would excite fury even among hermits and ascetics, not to speak of householders. The Mauryan king was not to encourage such tendencies as would lead him to oppress citizens and village people by levying heavy fines and taxes. Chandragupta employed a large number of confidential spies to keep him truthfully informed of public opinion. Aśoka's tours were designed for the purpose of direct contact with the people. He made it a rule to visit the village elders, the natural leaders of public opinion there. Disloyal subjects would be prone to encourage foreign invasion. Therefore, for both internal and external safety, the Mauryan king had to see that public opinion was favourable to himself. Regard for public opinion was then a practical limitation on the king's absolute authority. The belief that he was by religion bound to rule righteously exerted a moderating influence on the king. Kauṭilya declared that the protection of his subjects would lead the king to heaven and the ruler who misgoverned was answerable for the sins of his subjects. He had to expiate for the unlawful punishment of an innocent man. Kauṭilya wanted the king who received taxes from the people to regard himself as their servant, living on wages like his officers.

The provision of the Council of Ministers was a check on the risk of abuse of royal power. In order to carry the Atlantean load of administration, the king was to employ ministers and to listen to their opinions. The Council of Ministers and the Mantrīs were an advisory body and their opinions might or might not be acceptable to the king; but it was binding on the king to consult them on 'all kinds of administrative measures'. Thus besides the king, the Mantrīs and the Council of Ministers played an important role in the administration of the country.

Kauṭilya clearly distinguishes between the members of the

Mantrī-parishad, the Mantrīs and the Prime Minister. Kauṭilya was the Prime Minister of Chandragupta Maurya, while Bindusāra and Rādhāgupta were in turn Prime Ministers of Aśoka. The inner cabinet of three or four members constituted the chief advisory body of the king, though the larger body, the Mantrī-parishad, was also often consulted and had to be called in in emergencies. Patañjali mentions the Chandragupta-sabhā meaning probably the Mantrī-parishad. Aśokan inscriptions refer to the Parishad. All kinds of administrative measures were preceded by deliberation in a well-formed council under an oath of secrecy. The Council deliberated over the means for carrying out work, for organizing men and resources for this, for fixing the time and place of the execution of the work, for providing against danger and for assuring the final success of the plan. Ministers were also concerned with foreign affairs. We have already referred to the importance Aśoka attached to discussions in the Mantrī-parishad.

There is a story preserved in the later Buddhist work, *Divyāvadāna*, which mentions that Prime Minister Rādhāgupta had opposed Aśoka's policy of making enormous gifts to the Buddhist Saṅgha to the detriment of the royal treasury and had prevailed upon the Yuvaraja to prevent the treasurer from making the gifts ordered by Aśoka. He looked upon this as a violation of kingly authority. Not much credit can be given to this story as we know that till the end of his reign, Aśoka maintained his unassailable authority and went on proclaiming edicts. At best, the story only shows the conspiracy of the Prime Minister with the heir-apparent against Aśoka, and does not prove any constitutional authority of the Mantrī over the King Emperor. The Mantrī-parishad or Amātya-parishad continued in the Śuṅga period also, and assisted both the king and the viceroy. It was consulted on matters of foreign policy, as Agnimitra of Vidiśā did.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY

Besides the Mantrī-parishad there was a large number of superior and subordinate officers. The king with the Prime Minister and the Purohit constituted the public service commission which selected high officers like Amātyas and Mahāmātras and placed them in charge of different departments, suitable to their ability and temperament, after being rigorously scrutinized and tested. Those who proved to be above monetary temptations were appointed in the revenue department. Good character, nobility of birth, loyalty to the king,

sharp intellect, good memory, and sound health were the basic qualifications attested to by teachers, friends, respectable persons and the confidential reports of spies. Officers were paid decent salaries, the Mantrī receiving 48,000 'paṇas'. They were also transferred from place to place. Presentations were made to them by the king on occasions like births, marriages, and funerals in their family. When in need, the government civil-servants were helped from out of the royal produce of forests, cattle, and fields. Specially meritorious service was rewarded by gifts of land and other presents. The sons and wives of those who died on duty were entitled to a subsistence. Infants, diseased persons and aged relations of deceased employees were to be shown favour. Demotion and in some cases dismissal were punishments for incompetent officers. Misappropriation and embezzlement of government money were heavily punished. In the case of some special departments, officers were made to make up the loss to the state exchequer if it was due to negligence on their part. On the whole, the Mauryan civil service did a fine job. Megasthenes praised the state of law and order in the kingdom, and was of opinion that the official cadre was held in great respect because of the high character and wisdom of its members. People left their houses often unguarded and only petty thefts were reported in the huge camp of Chandragupta. Aśoka called upon officers to behave as nurses of the people, knowing their troubles and making sincere efforts to remove them.

The highest Mauryan civil servants were known as Amātyas or Mahāmātras, from amongst whom were appointed councillors, heads of departments, judicial officers and even army officers. For purposes of administration, many departments under 'adhyakshas', assisted by numerous subordinates, 'yuktas' and 'upayuktas', were set up under the central government. The revenue department was under Samāharta, assisted by Sthānika and Gopa, who were to maintain an up-to-date register of the human and natural resources of villages and cities for the assessment of revenue and the planning of the state's activities. Sannidhāta was the head of the department for the collection of revenue while Samāharta was in charge of storing and saving the revenue collected. The main sources of revenue were the income from the crown-lands, bali and other taxes on privately cultivated lands, toll duties on articles for sale, income from mines, forests, transport, state-trading and judicial fines. In times of distress, cultivators were given concessions by way of remission of taxes and grants of loans and seeds. During national emergencies, the rates of taxes were raised,

loans and voluntary gifts were demanded from the people, the rich were forced to yield their accumulated riches in many ways, and money was collected from simple god-fearing people by setting up images for public worship. But it would be incorrect to regard the Mauryan state as a mere tax-gathering institution. As a matter of fact, the state spent a lot on the defence and welfare of the people. Revenue collectors were asked to emulate the example of the gardener who gathered fruits only when they became ripe; 'collection of revenue or fruits when unripe shall never be carried on lest their source may be injured causing immense trouble.'

THE ARMY

Chandragupta Maurya maintained a large army consisting of 600,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry and 9,000 elephants. Megasthenes refers to 'chariotry' and admiralty as wings of the army besides the transport and commissariat departments meant for looking after the provisions of the army. Chandragupta maintained a regular, well-paid, standing army whose soldiers had no other function except fighting and spending their days in amusement and idleness in times of peace. Kauṭilya places infantry, cavalry, elephantry and chariotry under separate heads of departments, who must have been assisted by subordinates. Megasthenes aware of the collegiate system of administration in Greek states thought them to be different committees in charge of respective divisions. The board for defence had thirty members and was divided into six committees of five members each respectively, looking after infantry, cavalry, 'chariotry', elephants, ships and transport commissariat. Though the king often took part in wars in person, there was a Commander-in-Chief of the army. We already know that Pushyamitra Śuṅga was the Commander-in-Chief of the Mauryan army.

THE IMPERIAL CITY

Megasthenes has left a very valuable account of the imperial city Pāṭaliputra and its administration. The city was situated on the confluence of the Gangā and the Son and was more than 9 miles in length and 1½ miles in breadth. It was shaped like a parallelogram and was protected by a wooden wall, remains of which have been found in Bulandibāgh near Kumhrār. In front it had a ditch 600 feet wide and 45 feet deep for defence and for receiving the sewage of the city. The city wall was crowned with 570 towers and had 64 gates. This was the greatest city in India. The palace in its

magnificence and splendour excelled the costly splendour of Susa and the magnificence of Ecbatana, the pride of the Persians. The palace of Chandragupta abounded in parks, pasture grounds and shady groves in which domesticated peacocks and pheasants added to the charm. Remains of Mauryan buildings, including a stone-pillared hall at Kumhrār and Aśokan monuments at Sadargali in Patna city, are the only available evidence so far for confirming the account of Fa-Hien who was held spellbound at seeing the stone buildings of Aśoka and took them to be the work of spirits rather than of men. Kauṭilya also describes in great detail the construction of the royal fortified city and palace. The palace was in the centre of the city and contained many chambers including underground passages for the security of the king and the treasury. Apartments for different castes and professions were also marked off.

The city according to Megasthenes was governed by a board of thirty members divided into six committees of five each. The members of the first looked after affairs relating to industrial arts. Those of the second, attended to the entertainment of foreigners, their lodging, travel, illness and their funerals in case of death. The third body kept a register of births and deaths with a view not only of levying taxes, but also in order that births and deaths among both high and low should not escape the cognisance of government. The fourth class superintended trade and commerce, taking charge of weights and measures and marketing conditions. The fifth class supervised manufactured articles and punished adulteration of goods. The sixth class was in charge of collecting the tilhā (or other taxes) on the articles sold. The entire city board was collectively responsible for matters affecting the general administration such as keeping public properties in proper repair, regulating prices, and looking after markets, harbours and temples. Though Kauṭilya does not speak of a board and its committees, he refers to the Nāgaraka, assisted by other officers like the Sthānika and the Gopa who was in charge of the city administration and who was concerned with the same kinds of functions as the board and its committees referred to by Megasthenes. The city appears to have been divided into four quarters each under a Sthānika, and these were subdivided into wards consisting of ten to forty houses under a Gopa. The Gopa was to maintain a register of inhabitants of houses, their income and expenditure, and their occupations. For the security of the city against undesirable visitors, the innkeepers, house-masters, vintners, artisans, and

merchants, were to report to the city authorities about strangers who resided with them, while physicians reported on those treated for suspicious wounds. Curfew was imposed between the hours of late night and before dawn banning the people from the streets; but midwives, doctors, funeral processionists, and government servants on duty were given special permits. The sanitation of the city was also looked after. The Nāgaraka or the city Mayor was required personally to make a daily inspection of water reservoirs, wells and tanks in the city. Throwing of dirt on the street and causing mire or water to collect in the street were punished with fines; similarly committing nuisance in places of pilgrimage, temples, state buildings, except due to disease or medicine were punishable offences. The throwing of the dead bodies of men and animals here and there was prohibited. Special routes were prescribed for funeral processions to reach approved cremation grounds. A fire brigade service was maintained to fight outbreaks of fire. Vessels filled with water were kept thousands in a row, not only in big streets and at crossroads but also in front of royal buildings. Every house-owner had to have essential equipment ready for fighting any outbreak of fire and every one was in duty bound to help in extinguishing fire in his neighbourhood. Naturally there were various restrictions in kindling fires in a city where wooden structures predominated and bright sunshine and strong winds were normal. Watchmen were appointed to guard the city and apprehend thieves, robbers and other miscreants moving about in a suspicious manner or during restricted hours.

GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF ECONOMIC LIFE

The Mauryan government did not follow a laissez-faire policy, but took an active part in economic affairs and tried to control them substantially. Mines were state property administered by government superintendents, and factories were set up by the government. Crown lands were managed by a superintendent, who, assisted by technical personnel and hired labourers, preserved seeds, reaped the harvest, provided and used natural and artificial fertilisers. The superintendent of weaving was in charge of royal weaving establishments and employed workers on the piece or time rate for the manufacture of different kinds of cloth. Yarn was spun by women who were in need of employment or assistance because of family troubles. The sale and manufacture of liquor was a State concern and public bars were run by the government to serve drinks to the people in

comfortable apartments under judicious restrictions. On certain festive occasions, private persons also were given licences to distil liquor. Forests were exploited for timber, elephants, and the manufacture of forest products under government control and management. The manufacture of weapons of war was a state monopoly. The superintendent of commerce looked after state-trading within and outside the kingdom. The royal mint was ably managed by experts. There were officers who measured the land and supervised irrigation facilities. Sudarśana lake in Girnār in Saurashtra was constructed in the time of Chandragupta Maurya.

Agriculture and rural development were given highest priority. The State took an active interest in the proper redistribution of population and in the direction of emigration. Lands were reclaimed and settled with hardy cultivators of the Śūdra caste. New villages on old ruins or new sites were set up according to plan demarcated by natural boundaries like rivers, bridges or planted forests of useful trees. Those who reclaimed waste lands and made them cultivable were given hereditary rights of possession, while lands reclaimed by government efforts were settled with cultivators for one generation. If they did not cultivate the lands properly thus adversely affecting the production of national wealth, they were deprived of such lands. Government officers like Superintendents, Gopas, Sthānikas, Veterinary Surgeons, Ambassadors and others were granted lands without the right of alienation. Priests and learned Brāhmaṇas were also granted lands yielding sufficient produce and were exempted from taxes and fines. Thus the simple village folk were benefited by associating with such experienced and useful persons. To help cultivators, the State provided for the breeding of good cattle and set up market towns for the favourable marketing of agricultural produce. Irrigation facilities in the shape of wells, tanks, canals and mechanical devices were provided on payment of a water-tax. By supplying them with grain and cattle and by offering to purchase the produce left over after deductions for seeds and subsistence, the State encouraged private adventurers to colonize waste lands. In times of need, cultivators were supplied with grain, cattle and money. When new settlements were opened and in emergencies, a remission of taxes was made. The government encouraged co-operative action in constructive projects by building bridges, digging canals and by giving land, timber and other things. Those villagers who did not take part personally in the village co-operative ventures were punished. Pasture

grounds on uncultivable lands were provided for cattle. By exercising ownership over all water channels, drains, irrigation ahars, the government ensured that the reservoirs would remain in good order all the time. Government officers measured the land of each cultivator to be irrigated and they also inspected the sluices by which water was let out from the main canals into their branches so that everyone might have an equal supply of it. Though costly entertainment companies or groups from outside were prevented from exploiting simple villagers and causing losses to men in their productive activities, the State encouraged villagers to lead a full life by organizing corporate shows and entertainments in which every villager had to take some part and make some contribution. The result of this was that the villages remained the most stable units of socio-economic life, undisturbed by political convulsions and military expeditions. People lived in peace and plenty with the state ready to help in emergencies. According to Diodoros, 'Famine has never visited India and there has never been a general scarcity of nourishing food.'

The Mauryan State did not neglect trade and commerce. Traders were granted numerous concessions, especially foreigners. Good roads and an efficient watch and ward system were assured by the government for goods in transit. Any loss on the way was to be made up by the government. Prices of articles for sale were fixed after considering the capital invested, the cost of manufacture, the quantity produced and the expenditure in transport and government dues. A reasonable rate of profit was allowed. Market towns and trade routes were established and restrictions on traffic were removed by the superintendent of commerce. The State also protected merchants from molestation by labourers, robbers, and government servants by employing watchmen, boundary guards and couriers. But the Mauryan State did not give a free hand to private industrialists, traders and merchants. We have seen that the State itself was a great industrialist for it ran many industries. Traders were to use standardized stamped weights and measures for the enforcement of which the superintendent was assisted by a large staff. The superintendent of toll collected toll dues, which varied according to the quality and the quantity of articles brought into the market for sale. He could punish those traders who tried to defraud the State of its due share and hoodwink consumers by tearing or counterfeiting royal seals, by substituting bad-quality products, by adulterating goods, giving short weight and other illegal acts. The

superintendent of commerce fixed the price of goods, the market hours, and the rate of profit. Trade in essential and precious commodities like weapons, foodstuffs, gold, gems and foreign goods was largely restricted and brought under strict government control and management.

JUSTICE

The quality of any administration is rightly determined by the efficiency of its judicial system. Kauṭilya advises neither severe nor mild punishment but just punishment. Besides the king who was the highest court, there were two other types of courts set up in different parts of the kingdom easily accessible to the people. The Dharma-sthīya court presided over by judges learned in law, dealt largely with civil cases arising between citizens; the Kaṇṭaka-śodhana courts, comprising the Pradeśtārāh, dealt with cases arising between the administration and the individual citizen, i.e. cases which disturbed the king's peace and involved defiance of numerous governmental regulations. These latter courts were like police and administration courts, intended not only as judicial tribunals but also as helpers in the apprehension of criminals. These courts were meant to remove the thorns (kaṇṭaka) in the way of the administration and in the normal life of citizens. Artisans, physicians, traders and merchants, who violated regulations and exploited people were tried and punished by these Kaṇṭaka-śodhana courts. Aśoka had exhibited exemplary concern for the proper administration of justice. He proclaimed a uniform judicial procedure and punishment throughout the dominion. With a view to making justice easy and prompt he delegated final judicial powers to Rājukas. He also called upon city-magistrates to see that no citizen was imprisoned without just cause. He also promised to send a Mahāmātra every five years to see that this order was carried out strictly. He empowered Dharma-māhāmātras to protect prisoners from molestation and to order their release if they had a large family to support, or were old. It was this humane and compassionate aspect of judicial administration which led Aśoka to grant three days, as exclusively their own, to prisoners sentenced to death. Capital punishment, imprisonment, fines and the mutilation of limbs were the main forms of punishment. Prisoners were released on birthdays of the king, on the birth of a royal son, and on coronation anniversaries. In trying cases, witnesses played an important part and both plaintiff and defendant were given

sufficient time to prepare and argue their cases. Perjury was a serious offence. Kauṭilya laid great emphasis on the proper administration of justice and according to him, the king who administers justice in accordance with Dharma, Vyavahāra, Saṁāsthā and Nyāya would be able to conquer the whole world. Naturally a judge who was not impartial and just and gave wrong judgements was punished and, in extreme cases, even dismissed.

ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

Though Mauryan administration was fairly centralized, the vast empire could not be governed as one unit. So the empire was divided into provinces with capitals under viceroys some of whom were royal princes. Aśoka was a Viceroy of Ujjain and Taxila, the seats of the Western and Northern provinces. Saurashtra was another province ruled by Rāshtrīya Pushyagupta in the time of Chandragupta and by the Yavana chief, Tushaspa, during the reign of Aśoka. Tosali (Dhauli) was the capital of the newly conquered province of Kaliṅga placed under the joint authority of Kumāra and Mahāmātrās. Suvarnagiri was the capital of the Southern province (Dakshiṇāpatha). These viceroys were assisted by councillors and ministers who sometimes oppressed the people. The citizens of Taxila complained to Prince Aśoka, who was sent by Bindusāra to put down their rebellion, that they did not oppose the king or the prince, but were against the ministers who insulted them.

Another subdivision was perhaps the Pradeśa equivalent to modern commissionaries, placed under the charge of Prādeśikas. Then came the Rājukas who were subordinate to the Prādeśikas as is clear from the order of enumeration in the edicts of Aśoka. The Rājukas were the district officers who were given wide powers, freedom of initiative and considerable autonomy. They were in charge of law and order, supervised irrigational facilities, collected taxes and were also revenue settlement officers. They were responsible for carrying out development and welfare schemes (Sukhiyāna) like digging wells, planting shady trees, constructing resthouses and water-sheds. Rājukas were also high judicial officers having the power to reward or punish those who deserved either. Aśoka made them a final authority in judging cases. Thus the Rājukas may be compared to the modern district magistrates or collectors who have many and varied functions to discharge and are responsible

for the overall development of a district. As the Adhyakshas (superintendents) were the backbone of the Mauryan central administration in charge of different departments in the imperial secretariat, so the Rājukas were the hub of the administration in the countryside, in charge of a manageable unit inhabited by over a lac of people. They were responsible for the welfare of the people and were to act as efficient 'nurses'. The Yuktas and Upayuktas were subordinate officers in both the central and local administrative units. The imperial city together with the Eastern province (Prāchya) was governed directly by the king, assisted by the imperial secretariat and the town authorities. The border regions were placed under Aṅta-pālas or Aṅta-mahāmātras because of their strategic importance.

As far as the villages were concerned, there was a headman (grāmika) helped by village elders. The Grāmika was a paid officer of the king, and exercised limited executive and judicial powers. He preserved pasture lands and encouraged co-operative activities in villages. He was responsible for the maintenance of law and order. If any theft was committed, he had to make up for the loss if the culprit was untraced. In view of the large size of the empire, the tradition of rural self-government and the difficulties of communication, the villages continued to enjoy a degree of autonomy even in the centralized system of the Mauryan government.

A WELFARE STATE

There is no doubt that the long arm of the central government touched practically every aspect of life as is clear from the large civil service entrusted with administration. This service was not only engaged in maintaining law and order but it also administered and regulated economic life. Aśoka went ahead and seriously took up the task of guiding the conduct of the citizens towards religion, the family, society and the king. These proclamations of piety, viewed from the constitutional point of view, mark the climax of the extension of the State's sphere of activities. But the government was not actually interested in augmenting its power. It was designed and inspired to serve the best interests of the people. The Mauryan state was a Welfare State which in its sincere endeavour to promote the total welfare of the people, was inevitably forced to control the total resources of the country. The identity of interests of the citizens and the State is fundamental for a Welfare State. The nationalization of mines, forests, and the running of State factories and

agricultural farms did not only increase the revenue of the State but also contributed to an increase in the welfare of citizens in many ways. The rights and duties of labourers and employers were demarcated. Consumers were protected against crafty traders and merchants, prices were fixed and sheer profiteering instincts were curbed. The State interfered in private enterprise in order to check the fall in production and to safeguard the interests of consumers. Public utility works such as the construction of roads, water-reservoirs and irrigation canals were taken up and protected. The government encouraged foreign trade in many ways and anticipated the view that, a 'proper volume of foreign trade is in the national interest rather than in the interest of any particular industry. It must be regarded as one of the responsibilities of the State.' (Beveridge) Standardization of weights and measures and their strict enforcement, together with other measures against the traders were, though revenue yielding, also contributing to the welfare of the community. The government appears to have shouldered the responsibility for the maintenance of unfortunate citizens like the orphans, the aged, the infirm, the afflicted, and the helpless. The State also provided sustenance to helpless pregnant women and also to the children they gave birth to. A more comprehensive scheme of social insurance is not easily to be met with even in modern days. But idleness was not encouraged because it corrupts, and the feeling of not being wanted demoralizes. Therefore the Mauryan State employed women as spinners of yarn, if for unavoidable reasons, they needed help and were willing to work with honour. The control of liquor manufacture and sale, and regulations regarding gambling and prostitution, besides yielding revenue, must have acted as some restraint on immorality. The health of the people was well looked after by the enforcement of rules of sanitation and by punishing adulteration of foodstuffs and medicines with undesirable ingredients. The physicians in the city and countryside were expected to control the spread of disease and to treat patients. They were punished, if because of their neglect patients suffered death or any loss of limb. The government actively came to help and lead the people during calamities, like fire, flood, famine, and so on. Precautionary measures were enforced on citizens. During large-scale distress, the king distributed grain out of government reserves and started public works, like the construction or repair of roads, repairs or construction of forts. Traders, artisans, musicians, beggars, buffoons and other

idlers who were thieves in effect were restrained from defrauding the people. Punitive action was taken not only against unscrupulous traders, but also against washermen, scavengers, physicians and those who, cheated simple folk. Thus the material and moral welfare of the people had priority in the programme of Mauryan government. For enriching the life of its subjects and ensuring full development of their personality, the government employed musicians, actors, dancers, reciters, perfumers, hair-dressers, mimics, painters, and others in cities and villages. Teachers of music and learned men were employed for service to the people. The refined taste of the commonest citizens can well be imagined from the fact that Kauṭilya asked the superintendent of a government weaving-factory to reward good workers with gifts of perfumes, scents and garlands which would serve as incentives to labourers. Aśoka was not satisfied with only the Prādeśikas, Rājukas and Yuktas taking up the promotion of Dharma among the people, as one of their additional duties; but he created in the 13th year of his reign a special class of officers known as the Dharma-mahāmātras, who were exclusively engaged in the work of promotion of Dharma among all sections of the people, including even the royal family. The welfare character of the Mauryan government can hardly be over-emphasized.

In order to pursue effectively the policy of promoting all-round welfare, the Mauryan State had to plan its activities. Planning is believed to be a modern concept; but even in those days attempts for the collection of full and up-to-date data about the whole nation's human and natural resources were made by the Mauryan government, as an essential prerequisite for the development of the kingdom. That special spies were sent to verify the registers of Gopas in villages and in city wards shows the supreme importance attached to this work. The government had, no doubt, to employ an extensive bureaucracy for carrying out their comprehensive programme of welfare, but this bureaucracy was inspired by the ideal of service. The Mauryan Welfare State gave enough liberty in economic and social fields to private persons and groups; but the continuance of it depended on the honest discharge of their responsibility to government and the people.

Indeed the welfare character of the Mauryan government is unparalleled in ancient history.

VII

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND CULTURE

325 B.C.—A.D. 320

A. Religion

THE period between 325 B.C. and A.D. 320 was specially fruitful from the point of view of religious development. It witnessed the growth of Paurāṇic Hinduism from earlier Brāhmaṇism, the rise of the theistic movements of Vaishnavism and Śaivism, and the full maturity of Buddhism and Jainism, which in the preceding epoch had exercised only a limited influence as local sects. Even as the integration of many smaller Janapada States, both monarchical and republican (Ekarāja and Saṅgha), had led to the foundation of a vast empire (mahālokavijit in the words of Aśoka), so did the coalescing and commingling of many of local cult, by establishing spiritual authority over vast masses of people, result in the emergence of national religious patterns that have persisted ever since.

We clearly discern two dominant trends, one spiritual, the other ethical, explicit in the sweeping religious changes of the Maurya-Śuṅga period. The spiritual factor was Bhakti and the ethical attitude amongst religionists was, in the words of Aśoka, Samavāya. The miracle-working power of Bhakti or unbounded love of God in the form of an Avatār (incarnation), supplied wings to the soaring spirit of each religion. Henceforth for about a millenium Bhakti is the central theme and motive force of every religious discipline. Both metaphysical thought and external ritual conformed to the cult of devotion in Brāhmaṇism as well as in Buddhism and Jainism. The other distinguishing feature of the religious life of the people is summed up in the following words of Aśoka: 'Samavāyo Eva Sādhu' (Rock Edict XII, Girnār). 'Concord alone is good and meritorious'. This was the message of peace, of the spirit of understanding and

of tolerance for all religions. This was the outstanding feature of the new age and it was zealously inculcated in all the religious movements of the time.

BRĀHMAṆISM

The majority of the people were worshipping ancient Vedic gods such as Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, Rūdra, Sūrya, Soma, Pūshā, Aryamā, Aśvinī, Sarasvatī, and so on. To this list new names were added, some of which have been given in the *Arthaśāstra*. 'In the centre of the city, the temples of gods such as Aparājitā (Durgā), Apratiratha (Vishṇu), Jayanta (Skanda), Vaijayanta (Indra), Śiva, Vaiśravaṇa (Kubera), Aśviṇs, and Śri-Madirā (Sri-Lakshmi) shall be built.' (*Arth.* II. 4.)

The Vedic gods were being propitiated by means of Yajnas and elaborate rituals as given in the Śrautasūtras were being followed. Buddhist texts also mention some of the Vedic sacrifices such as Aśvamedha and Vājapeya, as well as a class of Brāhmaṇas called 'mahā śāla', who officiated at these sacrifices, received fat fees, were proficient in the Vedas (vedānām pāragāh) and were highly respected. The Pāli canon makes generous references to the ancient Ṛishis who 'were ascetics (tapassino) and practised self-control. Their riches consisted not of cattle, gold or grain, but of learning and purity. They were never harmed, protected as they were by Dhamma. They held austerity, rectitude, tenderness, love and forbearance in high esteem. They performed sacrifices with rice and other things which they could collect by begging, and never killed cows in sacrifices.' This ideal was still the living faith of the people, who were extremely devoted to the Ṛishis of olden times. Patañjali expressly mentions that Vedic study was flourishing in his time. The high metaphysical traditions of Upanishadic times still had their adherents, and there were families of 'sophists' who offered oblations (sthālipāka) to a deity called Jnā (knowledge) who personified the ideal of knowledge. We see them mentioned for the first time in the *Śvetāśvatara Upanishad*. Patañjali found the tradition still alive in his time. (*Jnānāni Brāhmaṇānām āpatyam, Bhashya*, IV. 1. 1.).

A feature of religious life which was common to the followers of Brāhmaṇism, Buddhism and Jainism was a greater emphasis on domestic ritual and ceremonies. Women were occupied in offering oblations (bali) to many titulary deities. For example, the offerings to Kubera were called 'mahārāj-bali'. These were cooked on the

same household fire as that on which the daily food was cooked and were given as much sanctity as the 'purodāśa' for vedic sacrifices. Bali offerings were not only made to Brāhmaṇical deities such as Śiva, Skanda, Brahmā, but to Yaksha, Nāga, Bhūta and others who were deities of folk religion. The householders also offered oblations to a new set of time-denoting deities like Māsa (month) and Saṁvatsara (year), or seasons like vasanta (spring), the offering being called 'Vāsantikāhavih' and to constellations like Pushya, Tishya, and so on. The belief in the 'nakshatra-devatās' (gods presiding over constellations) was a universal feature of religious life in the Maurya-Śuṅga period. Children born under particular stars such as Pushyadatta, Tishyadatta, and so on were named after them, since the parents believed in their benign influence. The star-names of male and female donors on both Buddhist and Jaina monuments testify to a universal custom. Names like 'Tissa' and 'Sijjha' were quite common, e.g. the President of the Third Saṅgīti (council) under Aśoka was named Tissa Moggaliputta, which means Tissa son of Moggali.

VAISHNAVISM

Meanwhile Brāhmaṇism was reorganizing itself as a theistic movement in its two main branches of Vaishnavism and Śaivism. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* refers to Nārāyana as the performer and seer of the Pāñcharātra Yajna, and the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* later on evolved the formula of Nārāyana-Vishṇu-Vāsudeva, emphasizing their identity. Pāṇinī (fifth century B.C.) makes definite mention of the cult of Bhakti and refers to those who were devotees of Vāsudeva and Arjuna, and who were known as Vāsudevaka and Arjunaka. Patañjali frankly accepts Vāsudeva as the name of a divinity, Scholars generally agree as to the accuracy of this identification and that the Bhāgavata cult dates from about 500 B.C. This was originally a local cult which grew up in the neighbourhood of Mathura. The *Niddesa*, a commentary on the *Suttanipāta*, emphasizes its cult-character when it refers to Vāsudeva-vāṭikā and Baladeva-vāṭikā, i.e. those who observed the 'vow' of the two divinities, Vāsudeva and Baladeva. The Bhāgavata religion was already a force during the Maurya-Śuṅga epoch. Megasthenes, who lived at Pāṭaliputra, informs us that Heracles (i.e. Kṛishṇa-Vāsudeva) was worshipped by the inhabitants of the plains of northern India. According to Curtius, an image of Heracles was carried in front of the army of Porus as he advanced

against Alexander. The Bhāgavatas were generous in welcoming even foreigners to their fold. Heliodoros, the Greek ambassador to the court of an Indian king in Central India, himself joined this theistic movement and gave concrete expression to his Bhakti by raising a garuḍa-pillar in honour of Vāsudeva, who was now regarded as the God of gods (Deva-deva). Whereas the shrines of other deities were called 'sthāna', those of Vāsudeva are referred to in the Mathurā epigraphs of the Śuṅga period as mahāsthānas. The supreme position of Vāsudeva is shown by the fact that the epithet 'sarveśvara' (paramount divinity) is applied to him in the Nārāyanavāṭika inscriptions found *in situ* at Nagari and at Ghosundi near Chittor. The *Arthaśāstra* refers to the existence of actual shrines in the centre of the metropolis of Pāṭaliputra which were dedicated to Apratiratha or Vishṇu. Patañjali knew the details of the Kṛishṇa legend and of the killing of the demon Kaṁsa. He also refers to the presentation of the Kṛishṇa-Kaṁsa story on the stage, in paintings, and in the form of recitations. Regular temples dedicated to Keśava, Balarāma and Kubera were known to Patañjali in the Śuṅga period. Much more important is his reference to the conception of 'chaturvyūha' which was a dynamic element in the philosophy of the Bhāgavatas (*Janārdanatvātmachaturth-eva, Bhāshya* VI. 3. 5.).

The *Bhāgavad-Gītā* gave a philosophy to the Pāncharātra school and the *Harivaṁśa* became a complete religious cult woven round the most vivacious and human personality of Kṛishṇa. Both appear to be literary products of the Maurya-Śuṅga culture-complex. The doctrine of Vibhūti-yoga as expounded in the *Gītā* (ch. X) is in tune with the prevailing spirit of an age that regarded Kṛishṇa as the paramount deity in a varied pantheon of local gods and cults. That the *Harivaṁśa* was compiled in this period is evident from its reference to the Brāhmaṇa Commander-in-Chief of the Audbhijja or Śuṅga family, who revived the ancient Aśvamedha in the Kali age. The Bhāgavatas did not depend as much on royal patronage as did the Buddhists, but developed a proselytizing technique on an aesthetic basis, making the fullest use of dance, drama, music, recitation and painting, as mentioned by Patañjali in his reference to the popular presentation of the Kṛishṇa legend. The *Harivaṁśa* proved effective as a scripture of the divine 'līlās' (sport) of Kṛishṇa, and it must have satisfied the same real need of the Bhāgavatas as that which the *Lalitavistāra* did for the Buddhists several centuries later.

ŚAIVISM

Many of the earlier cults and ascetic movements found their integration in the Śaivite school of the Bhakti movement. Patañjali refers to Śiva-Bhāgavatas who were devotees of Śiva but had accepted the techinque of the Bhāgavatas. Rūdra as the Great God (Mahādeva), was a Vedic conception, and its legacy with the associative worship of Bhūtas, Pretas, Yakshas, Nāgas and Piśāchas had been handed down as part of traditional Brāhmaṇism. The Śaiva-Bhāgavatas neutralized the dross of the terrific practices associated with Rūdra, and recovered gold of the highest purity in the form of a devotional cult centring in the loving personality of Śiva, his consort Pārvati, and their son Skanda. Not only was a complete system of metaphysical thought evolved which made Śiva, the Supreme Divinity to be realized in the lotus of the heart through Yoga, but the grand theme of the Śiva-līlā was presented with such loving tenderness and refinement as are rare in the annals of Indian literature.

The Śiva cult was once widespread in Magadha, where Jarāsandha was its great votary, and north of the Gangā in Mithilā where, in the family of Janaka, Śiva's bow received traditional worship. It was in fact an ancient local cult which the *Rāmāyana* mentions as Dhanur-mahā. We may be certain that these primitive rites continued to receive popular homage in the form of annual festivals which were never missed.

During the Kushāna period, Śaivism became a real force, for it had been reorganized under the dynamic inspiration of the Pāśupata ascetics. The *Sabhāparva* (Mahābhārata) states that Śaṅkara was worshipped in the homeland of the Śākas in Central Asia. Foucher holds the same opinion. We may take it that Wima Kadphises, who styles himself a Māheśvara, or devotee of Śiva, had been initiated into Śaivism before he came to India. Kanishka, Huvishka and Vāsudeva continued the minting of coins bearing the figure of Śiva standing with his Nandi (bull). Śaivism also became the chief vehicle of Yoga and asceticism, which secured to it the highest honour among the religious systems of that period.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism had existed in Magadha and the Vajji country as a local movement amongst the Śramaṇas. From the outset it throve on royal patronage. Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru were in personal touch with Buddha and paid him the homage due from pupils. Buddha

had spent much time in preaching at Rājgṛiha and Vaiśālī where communities of laymen and monks had formed themselves. Two Councils of monks had already been held for the rehearsal and compilation of the canon, the first at Rājgṛiha after six months of Parinirvāṇa with 500 monks, and the second at Vaiśālī with 700 monks (for which reason it was called 'satta-śatika') remaining there in session for eight months in the Valukārāma. It is said that a section of the monks challenged the views of the traditionalists, the Theravādins, and this led to the first schism in the Saṅgha. In course of time, the attitude of the dissenting monks stiffened and controversies became more pointed, leading to the division of the monks into eighteen sects (paśandas), in which condition Aśoka found them.

Events of the gravest character had been taking place in the Buddhist Saṅgha in Magadha, and Aśoka found it in a state of spiritual crisis. The harmony of the monasteries was disturbed by strife, and the Theravādins, having refused to participate in the various religious ceremonies with the dissenters, even the Uposatha rites had been stopped. Moggaliputta Tissa, shrewd as he was, discerned danger from the coming storm and withdrew to a secluded place in the hills, making over charge to Mahendra Thera, who was Aśoka's son and a new convert to the Church. By this time Aśoka had been fully drawn into the vortex of Saṅgha politics. In fact he had allowed himself to slide into the focal position of a Śāśanadāyāda (director), which had implied his taking over the major responsibility of directing the course of events of the Buddhist organization. The Emperor wished to intervene and so deputed a responsible minister to settle the causes of dispute and to restore the Uposatha ceremony which had not been convened for seven years. The minister consulted his colleagues who advised him to deal with affairs in the manner of a summary criminal trial. He thereupon repaired to the monastery, summoned an urgent meeting of the Bhikshusaṅgha and disclosed that he had royal orders to restore the Uposatha. The Theravādins refused to sit with the heterodox monks (titthiyehi saddhim) and there followed a general massacre in which many traditionalist monks were killed; and it was only when Yissa, a brother of Aśoka, who had become a monk and was living in the Aśokārāma, intervened, that this insensate loss of life was ended. As soon as the Emperor came to know of this, his heart burned with the bitterest remorse. He immediately went to the monastery to assure the Thera monks that he had not authorized the minister to act in so sinful a manner. In

this turn of events, it is possible to detect deliberate excess on the part of the royal ministers, who could not have been happy over Aśoka's total landslide in favour of the Buddhist Saṅgha. Utter grief now gripped the soul of the Emperor, who despatched urgent messengers to Moggaliputta Tissa beseeching him to come back. Twice he refused, but ultimately returned.

His first act was to use his spiritual authority to comfort the conscience-stricken king. For seven days Aśoka stayed in the monastery while he received instruction from Moggaliputta Tissa regarding the truth of Buddha's doctrine (samavāya). The Emperor then decided to strike strongly and mould the affairs of the Saṅgha so as to bring about a final settlement. He ordered a congregation of the Bhikshusaṅgha, threw a cordon round it and asked the monks to be seated in separate groups according to their religious beliefs, and interrogated each group in order to find out its creed. They gave out what each professed, but the Emperor who had already been 'instructed' by Tissa as to the true doctrine, rejected them all as followers of heterodox views and excommunicated them in white robes. Having thus effected a grand purge of sixty thousand monks who had been defiling the church and were like thorns in its side, he turned to those who remained and asked: 'What in your view, Sirs, was the creed of the Enlightened One?' They replied, 'Verily, O King, the Buddha was a Vibhajjāvādin.' Vibhajjāvāda was identical with Theravāda, or the doctrine of the Elders, i.e. the original teaching of the Buddhist Church. The king then turned to Tissa: 'Was the Buddha a teacher of Vibhajjāvāda, Sir?' On the latter's confirming it, the Emperor expressed his satisfaction thus: 'The doctrine now stands purified. Let the order of monks now hold its Uposatha,' and having instituted a guard for the safety of the monastery, returned to the palace.

Now that Moggaliputta Tissa had complete mastery of the situation and all the circumstances were in his favour, he hit upon a bigger plan for consolidating the Church and the doctrine. He selected one thousand monks to form a general convocation (saṅgīti) in order to settle questions of doctrine (Dhamma) and to fix the text of the scriptures (Vinaya). This was the Third Buddhist Council, called Sahassika (convocation of the thousand monks), which sat in session for nine months and completed the rehearsal of the scriptures.

This event took place in 253 B.C. when the Emperor had been consecrated seventeen years. He also planned the dispatching of missions

to the bordering countries in order to propagate the doctrine of Buddha: Majjhantika to Kashmir and Gāndhāra, Mahādeva to Mahiśaka Mandala, Rakkhita to Vanavāsi, Dhammarakkhita the Greek to Aparānta, Mahādhammarakkhita to Mahārāshṭra, Mahārakkhita to the Greek dominions, Majjhima to the Himalayan regions, Sonaka and Uttara to Suvarnabhūmi (Burma), and Mahinda with four companions to the island of Tāmraparni or Ceylon. Mahendra, who had been ordained in 264 B.C. by Mahādeva Thera, together with his sister Sanghamitrā, who was a nun of equal standing, went to Ceylon at the head of a mission which was to prove extremely fruitful for the subsequent history of Buddhism. These foreign missions must have received Aśoka's active support. Through them, he tried to establish peace far beyond his vast dominions. For him Buddhism was equivalent to the moral law and the most acceptable medium of civilization and it was through his endeavour that it promised to be the world religion, being propagated from Burma and Ceylon as far as the Greek dominion on the Mediterranean.

At home he was even more vigilant in infusing new life into it and upholding its high ideals and he lent the weight of his authority to check the schismatic tendency in the Church. The edicts of Sārnāth, Kauśāmbī and Sāñchi appear to be almost a direct sequel to the events that took place in the Aśokārāma monastery. The Sārnāth Pillar edict reproduces the imperial order to his officers at Pāṭaliputra: '...the Saṅgha shall not be divided by any one whatsoever. Whoever, monk or nun, breaks up the Saṅgha must be made to put on white robes and to take up residence outside the monastery.' The same instruction was issued to the Mahāmātra officers at Kauśāmbī. The Sāñchi version reflects the Emperor's contentment with the unity he had bestowed on the Church: 'The Saṅgha of both monks and nuns is now consolidated for as long as the sun and moon (shall endure).' He grasped the essential unity of all religions and laid stress on concord and harmony (samavāya) as the cardinal virtue for the clergy and laity in all sects. He himself practised what he taught to others by extending his gifts to the Brāhmaṇas, Śramaṇas, Ajīvikas and Nirgranthas, and his wide sympathies enlisted the co-operation of the masses in his noble efforts to achieve the spiritual regeneration of his people.

When the benevolent control of the Emperor was removed in 232 B.C., both the empire and the edifice of Buddhism began to crumble.

The history of the Śuṅga period records a swing of the pendulum in favour of a Vedic revival. The relations of Pushyamitra, the Brāhmaṇa Commander-in-Chief and leader of the political revolt with the Buddhist Saṅgha, were not cordial. He performed two Aśvamedha sacrifices and favoured the revival of Brāhmaṇical Hinduism and the Sanskrit language and literature. Bereft of royal support the Theravādin monks experienced a sharp decline in their prestige. It was mainly the Mahāsaṅghikas and their offshoots, viz. the Rājagiriyas, Hemavatas, Chetiyavādins and other allied schools which, in subsequent centuries, became the spearheads of that counter-revolution in Buddhistic thought which was to lead ultimately to the emergence of Mahāyāna Buddhism with the Bodhisattva ideals. In the Kushāna period, Mahāyāna had firmly established itself at many of the great centres in the north-west and at Mathurā. The Mahāyānists were lovers of Sanskrit and of Bhakti, their articles of faith being based on the pattern of the Bhāgavatas rather than on orthodox Buddhism. Just as the Third Council was convened with the royal support of Aśoka, so the Fourth was summoned with the support of Kanishka, who was perplexed by the variety of the interpretations given by different teachers and therefore submitted the points of controversy to the judgement of the leading monks of all countries. They deliberated, and, unlike the Second and Third Councils, which had kept the eighteen sects at arm's length, the Council of Kashmir admitted the claims of the dissenting eighteen sects as giving a correct interpretation of the teachings of Buddha. Kanishka's empire extended from Central Asia to Bihar, and within this vast area Buddhism grew rapidly and smoothly with the help both of royal and popular support. Taxila, Mathurā, Sārnāth and Pāṭaliputra were radiating centres of Buddhist art and religion. The new movement was not at all hostile to its contemporary faiths but befriended them all in the true theistic spirit of the age. The worship of the Buddha image with its detailed ritual was the central attraction of popular Buddhism during the early centuries of the Christian era. Bihar became a silent spectator of events, as the initiative was wrested from her by more active centres in north India and the Andhra country.

AJĪVIKAS

Founded by Makhali Gosāla in the time of the Buddha, the Ajīvika sect continued to be of some importance in the Maurya period also.

Kauṭilya branded its adherents, together with the Buddhists, as being unworthy of entertainment at any ceremony connected with gods or ancestors. Aśoka looked upon them more liberally, and directed his Dharma-mahāmātras to look after their welfare and progress. In the 12th year of his consecration he made gifts of two caves in the Barābar hills, in the Gaya district to the Ajīvikas. One of the caves was called Nigoha-kubha (nigrodha cave) and the hill-group was known as Khalaṭika Parvata, which is mentioned by Patañjali as well. On the basis of his deciphering some letters in the inscription there V. H. Jackson suggests that the third cave in this group of four was also dedicated to the Ajīvikas. In the same hill another group of three caves, known as the Nāgārjuni group, was bestowed on the Ajīvikas to serve as a shelter during the rains by Devānampiya Daśaratha, who, according to the Purāṇas, was a descendant of Aśoka. The Ajīvikas were one of the many Śramaṇa sects who in ancient times were known as the Determinists (Niyati-vādin). A necessary corollary of their faith was a belief in absolute quietism (śānti) and repudiation of action (mā karma kārshīh) as noted by Patañjali. They continued in later times as one of the many odd sects developing certain angularities such as abstinence from milk and dairy products, or the wearing of blue robes.

JAINISM

In an earlier chapter, the origin of the religion of Jina from 'Nigantha Nātaputta' Mahāvīra has been dealt with. His dynamic personality secured for the Church a sure footing in Mithilā, Magadha, Aṅga and most probably in Bengal during his lifetime. Aśoka found the nirgranthas to be a respectable community which he specially mentions as worthy of the solicitous care of his Dharma-mahāmātra officers (Pillar Edict VII). Aśoka's grandson Samprati, said to be a pupil of Ārya Suhastin, is said to have done for Jainism what Aśoka had done for Buddhism. But Jainism was destined to run its course more smoothly and on the solid support of its own clergy and laymen.

In the earliest accounts of its expansion as recorded in the *Kalpasūtra*, we come across definite evidence that the Jaina Saṅgha established itself both to the south and to the north of the Ganges. In the south-east, the Tāmraliptika and the Vajrika Śākhās were in control of the then inhabited regions of Bihar and west Bengal, while the Vajrabhūmi held sway in modern Birbhum. Similarly the

Kotivarshīya and the Puṇḍravardhanīya Śākhās were organized in north Bengal and the Uchchanagari Śākhā over Mahāsthāna or central Bengal. That the Jaina Saṅgha was able to function as a well-knit organization over such a wide area in the Maurya-Śuṅga period, points to its efficient solidarity and the organizing ability of its leaders. Champā, Vaiśālī, Rājgṛiha and Pāṭaliputra were important centres of the Jaina lay community whose willing obedience and liberal gifts should be given due credit as contributing to the solidarity and longevity of the Saṅgha and the faith.

In the Śuṅga period, Jainism extended its hold towards Kaliṅga where Khāravela, in the course of his meteoric career, restored a Jina image and ordered a great celebration in the Khandagiri-Udayagiri hills (Kumārī Parvata) in honour of Arhats. Jainism originated in Bihar but managed to flourish in surrounding regions with the growth of new strength during later centuries.

MINOR RELIGIOUS SECTS

In addition to well-organized religions, there existed a multiplicity of local cults which constituted the religion of the masses. The *Niddesa*, a commentary on the *Suttanipāta* gives a list of such cults: There are some ascetics and Brāhmaṇas who seek purity by taking vows to practise some habits (vātaśuddhika) peculiar to the elephant, horse, cow, dog, crow; there are devotees of Vāsudeva, Baladeva, Pūrṇabhadra, Maṇibhadra, Agni, Nāga, Suparṇa, Yaksha, Asura, Gandharva, Mahārāja, Chandra, Sūrya, Indra, Brahmā Deva, and Diśa, (*Niddesa*, I, p. 89). The *Milinda Panha* enumerates the followers of the mystic cult of Maṇibhadra, Pūrṇabhadra, Chandra, Sūrya, Kāli, Śiva, Vāsudeva, and so on, who were in fact believers (bhaktiyo), in many divinities, each the centre of a cult. These cults were esoteric in nature, and, as Nāgasena has stressed, the votaries scrupulously guarded their secrets from outsiders (tesain tesan rahassain tesu tesu ganesu yeva charati, avasesanain pihitain). This large medley of names occurs in a still more amplified version in the *Jnātadharma* and *Rājapraśnīya suttas* of the Jaina āgama, which refers to the cult festivals (mahā) of Rājgṛiha in honour of Indra, Skanda, Rūdra, Śiva, Vaiśravaṇa, Nāga, Yaksha, Bhūta, Nadi, Tadāga, Vṛiksha, Chaitya, Parvata, Udyāna, Giri, Stūpa, Mukunda, Sāgara, and so on. We also find references to the religious festivals of the Kāma, Dhanush, Ārya and Kottakriya goddesses. This list gives a representative milieu of the socio-religious life of the masses. Each of these

sects followed its own peculiar cult practices. For example, the Disavātika of the *Niddesa* is mentioned as the Disapokkhiya order in the *Bhagavati*. A member of this sect sanctified his surroundings by sprinkling water and then collected fruits and flowers. He practised fasting broken at the sixth meal. On the day on which he broke his fast, he sprinkled the eastern quarter, propitiated Soma, the lord of the east, and collected bulbous roots, leaves, flowers, fruits, seeds and green vegetables. Then he returned to his hut, cleaned the sacrificial altar (vedī) and went to bathe in the Ganges. He built another altar of grass and sand, kindled a fire by rubbing together pieces of wood, and with ritualistic paraphernalia by his side, offered honey, ghee and rice to the fire. Then he prepared an oblation, worshipped Vaiśvadeva and the guests and only then did he break his fast. Next he observed the 'chhatthama' fast and proceeded to the south to propitiate Yama, then to the west to propitiate Varuṇa and finally to the north to propitiate Vaiśravaṇa. Hermits and kings became members of such orders.

The most powerful cult was that of the Yakshas and Yakshis. These gods and goddesses were being lifted to a higher plane and reconciled with the sublime thoughts of Buddhism, Jainism and Vaishṇavism. The case of the ogress, Jarā of Rājgṛiha, is a striking example of this assimilative process. Jarā was a primitive cruel demon propitiated by bloody offerings. The Buddha during his visit to Rājgṛiha changed her heart and she, as Hāriti, became the presiding deity of child-birth and the protectress of children. According to the *Mahābhārata*, Jarā, originally a Rākshasi, was transformed into a benevolent divinity presiding over homes (gṛihadevi), and began to be worshipped by householders, who painted her image on the walls of their homes. While the higher religions rose and fell in popularity, the folk cults sailed along on an even course, and were acceptable to all ranks. Festivals and worship at shrines continued as ever before. For example, the shrine of Maṇi-nāga was continuously in use from about the sixth century B.C. right down to the Gupta period, while the Maṇiyār math in the heart of the valley of Rājgṛiha links age-old traditions with our own times. In the second century A.D. an important sculpture of Maṇi-nāga and his sister, Bhagini Sumāgadhi, was ordered from Mathurā and installed in the Nāga shrine at Rājgṛiha. The ancient fairs held at these sanctuaries became an annual feature, being kept alive from generation to generation.

One predominant fact of religious history in this period should be particularly noted. Aśoka in his zealous endeavour had made contact with the masses and discoursed with them on religious matters. This opened the way for an unrestricted mingling of cult deities and higher religions. This is declared by Aśoka himself in the minor Rock Edict I. Gods that had remained aloof and unassimilated for so many years were now absorbed (*amisa deva husu te dani misa kata*). This obscure passage finds its lucid commentary in the monuments of Bhārhut, Sāñchi and Bodh Gaya where on the pillars of the Stūpa railings a host of Yakshas, Yakshis, Nāgas and Nāgis have been freely admitted to the precincts of Buddhism. Once mere cult deities, they now had a share in a higher pantheon with an increase in respectability. The Bhāgavatas did this in a most aesthetic manner. They declared that the various cults of the horse, the elephant, the cow, and other animals; the sun, moon and stars; trees, rivers, oceans and mountains; Gandharvas and Rūdras; Indra, Vaiśravaṇa, Suparṇa, Nāga, Yaksha, Rākshasa, Skanda, and others were but manifestations (vibhūtis) of one Supreme Divinity, who as Vishṇu pervaded all beings, animate as well as inanimate (*Gītā*, ch. X). It is thus clear that the Buddhists, the Jainas and the Vaishṇavas shared an identical movement of socio-religious integration and rapprochement which was also praised by Aśoka. The mighty assimilative power of this movement found its highest expression in the Hinduism of the Purāṇas, which may be said to be the result of the religious ferment during the period under review. Its watchword was universal tolerance which became the national creed of religious life in India for all time to come.

B. Society

There were several social trends which developed during the six centuries from the beginning of the Maurya period to the end of the Kushāna. In spite of the strength of ascetic movements which took a pessimistic view of life, the general attitude of the age was that of a healthy interest in the joys of the earthly life, a love for all the good things of this world and an enrichment of domestic and social culture. Life's gaiety was not entirely benumbed by sorrow or frustration. Literary records and sculptural evidence alike portray men and women of robust health, bedecked with ornaments and fine costumes, enjoying dancing, music, drama and sports in the open sunshine. Eastern India or Magadha was the homeland of a

variety of garden sports (prāchām krīdā), such as Śālabhañjikā (plucking of Śala flowers), Aśoka pushpa prachāyikā (gathering of Aśoka flowers).

Both men and women enjoyed taking part in special social gatherings called 'samāja'. Kauṭilya (*Arth.* II. 25) refers to the 'utsava', the 'samāja' and the 'yātrā' where drinking was unrestricted for four days. He exhorts rulers to conciliate the people by continuing such institutions (*Arth.* XIII. 5). The 'samājas' consisted of dance recitals or dramatic shows (pekkham) and fights between animals such as elephants, horses, buffaloes, bulls, goats and rams. The puritanical zeal of Aśoka tried to restrict these pleasures, but the interdiction does not appear to have got home to the people.

Religious life was represented by a multiplicity of sects, but the mainstay of society were the secular classes designated as Gṛihasthas or householders. They lived up to a high moral standard, built primarily on a lofty conception of the home and family with proper regard for domestic and social relations. Society was based on the system of Varṇas and Āśramas. The spread of ascetic movements and the influx of Greeks, Iranians, Parthians and Scythians put a strain on the established order of the four classes. Nevertheless, foreigners too were allowed to enter into and become part of Indian society. According to Patañjali, the Śaka-Yavana group was equal with the Śūdras but that hardly made a difference in those days for the Śūdras were not looked down upon. It was very much like the English in India, who although counted as Śūdras in terms of caste divisions, held a very high position in public esteem as rulers.

Kauṭilya upheld the ideal of the preservation of the Varṇāśramadharma as the main duty of the king. In Aśoka's time this objective receded into the background, but was pushed to the forefront again by Pushyamitra. There must have been an adverse turn of the wheel under the Kushānas, but the position was gradually redeemed in favour of the entrenched caste divisions in the post-Kushāna epoch. Although the Varṇas remained four in number, the number of castes and mixed castes multiplied *ad infinitum*, each new group finding its social adjustment as an autonomous caste. A novel fiction was also evolved in law-books that foreign tribes such as the Yavanas, the Śakas, the Kāmbojas, the Pāradas, the Pahlavas and the Chinas were originally Kshatriyas (*Manu*, X. 43-44), but gradually debased into Vṛihalas. The Lichchhavis, an

influential ancient community of Mithilā, was reckoned to be of Vrātya origin. It was not so much a social stigma, as an admission of their republican origin from some primitive Saṅgha of the Vrātya type which, as we know from Pāṇinī's commentaries, lived by violence (utseda-jīvināh).

According to Megasthenes, 'all Indians are free and not one of them is a slave.' He adds that, 'the Indians do not even use aliens as slaves and much less a countryman of their own.' Megasthenes must have observed life in the metropolis of the empire and should have known what he was writing. Yet it is difficult to reconcile his statement with the numerous references to slavery in the Smṛitis. The slaves in India, however, were humanely treated as household servants and were not subjected to the misery and oppression that was the lot of slaves in Greece and in Greek possessions. The laws of Kauṭilya relating to slavery were very liberal and enlightened; e.g. all slaves were entitled to be set at liberty on payment of a fixed amount of ransom; the offspring of a man who had sold himself into slavery was to be an Ārya or freeman; a female slave regained her freedom as soon as her master begot a child of her. A slave in Kauṭilyan law could enjoy his earned profits and also the inheritance received from his father.

The *Arthaśāstra* is quite liberal in its attitude towards the rights of women to own and use property freely. A woman was allowed more than two thousand kārshāpanas to be endowed in her name and jewellery without limit. If she lived a pious life after her husband's death, she was entitled to enjoy his property. A daughter was allowed to inherit her father's property if she had no brothers. Women occupied themselves in the house with numerous ceremonies and rituals called maṅgala (auspicious) by Aśoka. He, in his zeal for the uplift of women, wanted to discourage them from the diverse, petty and worthless ceremonies which mothers and wives performed in times of illness in the family, marriages of sons and daughters, birth of children, and departure of dear ones from home. He exhorts in a mood of restraint: 'Ceremonies should certainly be performed. But these bear little fruit. That, however, is productive of great fruit which is connected with Dharma. Herein are these: proper treatment of employees and dependants, reverence to teachers, restraint of violence towards living creatures, and liberality to Brāhmaṇa and Śramaṇa ascetics. These and such others are called Dharmamaṅgalas.' In his anxiety to entlist the co-operation of women, he

instituted a new and separate set of officers called Strī-Adhyaksha-Mahāmātras (ministers placed in charge of women's welfare) whose duty it was to raise the moral life of women (Rock Edict XII). Aśoka appears to us almost like a modern figure on account of these measures of social amelioration.

C. Education, Science, Language & Literature

Education during this period continued to be given on the same lines as before, for the highly organized monastic system as that of Nālandā had yet to come into existence. But the curricula must have been expanded as the activities of the community, as mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra*, had increased very greatly. The number of sciences and arts mentioned by Kauṭilya also envisages the advance of knowledge in the science of peace as well as of war.

The period is characterized by the unprecedented expansion of classical Sanskrit and the many-sided outburst of literary activity which created the Purāṇas, a commentary on ancient Vedic and scientific texts, the Dharmaśāstras or Smṛitis, the two epics, dramas, poems, and a great deal of literature relating to grammar, polity, medicine, erotic and Ākhyāna or romantic literature.

The *Ashṭādhyāyi* of Pāṇinī had come into existence at least a century before Kauṭilya, and marked the close of the period of Vedic literature which includes the Chhandas works, the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas, the Upanishads, the Śrauta, the Dharma and the Gṛihya Sūtras. All these had developed under the aegis of the Vedic academies called 'Chāraṇas'. A body of minor Sūtra texts known as the *Chāraṇa Parishishṭa* must have been compiled in the later Nanda and Maurya periods.

The period is specially famous for producing the Purāṇas and Epics. Pāṇinī refers to authors who composed in the 'śloka' metre as the 'ślokakāra'. They were responsible for much of the facile versification, the root of the Itihāsa-Purāṇa literature. Although this class of literary work is mentioned in the *Atharvaveda* and the *Chhāndogya Upanishad*, it is from Kauṭilya that we learn of its fullest development. The preamble of the *Mahābhārata* and of the several Purāṇas credits the Paurāṇika bards with the authorship of the Purāṇas. This seems to be based on a long-standing but genuine tradition. The idea of the study of Itihāsa-Purāṇa as a new subject was originally developed in the Vedic Chāraṇa associated with the name of Pārāśarya, the founder of a Chāraṇa of the *Ṛigveda*, and then regularly expanded by

a host of his disciples, called Paurāṇikas (Purāṇa-experts), who were mostly recruited from that class of litterateurs called Sūta or Magadha. A Magadha is mentioned in the *Atharvaveda* as being a friend of the Vrātya leaders, whose people may be identified with the host of non-Aryan tribes occupying Magadha and the adjoining regions. The teachers and custodians of the family annals and traditions of these Vrātyas were the Magadhas. The term (Magadha) later was the name given to a court annalist. The great mass of Epic and Paurāṇic poetry was nurtured by the specialist classes, Magadhas, Sūtas and Paurāṇikas. Patañjali makes pointed reference to the stories of Yayāti, Paraśurāma and Yavakṛita which now form part of the epic redaction but which in the Maurya-Śuṅga period were subjects for study by specialists. The stories of Sumanottara, Vāsavadattā and Bhīmarathi, also mentioned by Patañjali, point to a prolific growth of romantic literature (ākhyāna and ākhyāyikā).

The happy result of all this literary activity was seen in the growth and maturity of classical Sanskrit literature in the post-Pāṇinī period. Classical Sanskrit was the language spoken by the Śishtas (respectable), i.e. the learned and cultured people from the North-West to the eastern border of Bihar. Patañjali was recording contemporary facts when he talked of Sanskrit, dealt with in the *Ashtādhyāyi*, as being the standard speech of Āryāvarta, i.e., the geographical region between the Himalayas and the Pāriyātra, and the two seas. Surely in this area there were the Prākṛits also which both Kātyāyana and Patañjali clearly distinguish from standard Sanskrit. The existing dialects lead us back to two prominent divisions of the Prākṛit language in the east, viz., an eastern Prākṛit, the ancestor of Maithili, Bhojpuri and Magahi, and a Western Prākṛit preserved mainly in the Kośali dialect. It was in fact Ardhamāgadhi which became the medium of the extensive canonical literature of the Jainas. Buddhist literature which is even more extensive was compiled in the Pāli language. There is much controversy about the original homeland of Pāli. It has been held of late that Pāli does not agree with the Māgadhi and Ardhamāgadhi dialects, but rather with Śauraseni of the Mathurā region, and that the original Buddhist canon was in a different Prākṛit which was later translated into Pāli, since Buddha gave freedom to all to study his message in their own language. Be that as it may, we are on more solid ground as regards the language of the masses in Bihar when we study the linguistic data of the Aśokan edicts. It was certainly a language

chosen by the Emperor on the basis of its being spoken and understood by the people at large (the jānapada-jana of his adoration) and which he therefore made his official language.

A few early inscriptions from Bihar and Bengal (e.g. Mahāsthāna, Bodh Gaya) and numerous epigraphs from Bhārhut, Sāñchi and Mathurā show the undoubted use of Prākṛit speech amongst the people. At the same time it should be remembered that the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya and the *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali which can be placed in some fixed chronological sequence, prove the undisputed supremacy of Sanskrit as a medium of literature. By the time of Kanishka, Sanskrit recaptured its prominent position and was recognized by Buddhists as the only language of cultural expression. The Jainas followed suit a few centuries later. From the time of Aśvaghosha onwards, it is the glory of Sanskrit that sheds lustre on the literary as well as on the philosophical works of Buddhism. Aśvaghosha is the earliest author of classical Sanskrit poetry and drama which have come down to us either complete or in fragments. The *Buddhcharita* and the *Saundarānanda* are perfect examples of Kāvya literature, which although to some extent conventional, are works of a real artist who knew how to produce the maximum effect by a vivid rendering of scenes. His is a simple style meant not for the delectation of the *élite* but to preach his philosophy of the renunciation of all selfish desire and the practice of active benevolence towards all beings. Aśvaghosha was born at Sāketa, but tradition affirms that he resided at the court of Pāṭaliputra. Kanishka had sent for this great poet, scholar and religious controversialist, but when he refused, the king attacked the Magadhan capital and carried off this Buddhist monk and saint! There are grounds for believing that from the time of Kanishka down to the time of Vāsudeva, Kushāna rule extended over Bihar. Aśvaghosha was also closely associated with the literary activity of the Fourth Buddhist Council held in Kashmir under the leadership of his teacher, Pārśva.

The intellectual traditions of Pāṭaliputra can be traced to a respectable antiquity much older than the time of Aśvaghosha. That queen of cities held a pre-eminent position in the literary life of the country during the Nanda and Maurya periods. Rājaśekhara records the tradition of a Śāstrakāra Parīkshā (test of writers on different sciences), held at Pāṭaliputra in which such celebrities as Upavarsha (a commentator on the *Mīmāṃsā* and *Vedānta sūtras*), Varsha (Pāṇinī's teacher), Pāṇinī (author of the *Ashṭādhyāyi*), Piṅgala (author of

Chhandovichitti), Vyādi (author of the grammatical treatise, *Saṅgraha*), Vararuchi (i.e. Kātyāyana) and Patañjali (author of the *Mahābhāshya*) submitted their scientific works for the judgement of the learned assembly of the metropolis. All these are exalted names in the literary annals of India. The authors of the *Mañjuśrimūlakalpa* and the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, and Tārānātha relate the story of Pāṇinī's friendship with one of the Nanda kings. The *Atthapakāśinī*, a commentary of the Siṁhalese *Mahāvaṁśa*, while narrating the early life of Chāṇakya, relates also how he visited Pāṭaliputra in search of literary disputes, most probably as a means to assert his early reputation. Nanda counted among his friends the Brāhmaṇa controversialists who must have formed his Sabhā (assembly). Patañjali informs us of the Chandragupta-Sabhā and Pushyamitra-Sabhā, assemblies of learned men in the respective kings' reigns, similar to the ancient royal Parishads of Pānchāla and Mithilā of an earlier epoch. Megasthenes, an eyewitness of their work, wrote: 'The Brāhmaṇas are employed publicly by kings at what is called the Great Synod where, at the beginning of the new year, all the philosophers are gathered together. Any philosopher who may have committed any useful suggestion to writing, or observed any means of improving crops and cattle, or for promoting public interest, declares it publicly.' It appears that Pāṭaliputra continued as a famous cultural centre in the post-Śuṅga and pre-Gupta periods.

The Vārtikas of Kātyāyaṇa numbering more than 4,000, approximately the number of Pāṇinī's own Sūtras, represent the accumulated tradition of grammatical studies for several generations after Pāṇinī. Literary accounts associate the career of Kātyāyaṇa with Pāṭaliputra. More stupendous was the *Mahābhāshya* (great commentary) of Patañjali written in the reign of Pushyamitra Śuṅga. It is deep like the ocean, replete with the most subtle discussions on the meaning, the practice and grammatical theories of Pāṇinī's rules and Kātyāyaṇa's comments. Patañjali has made several references to the civic life of Pāṭaliputra, and especially to the rich citizens and the imposing city-walls.

The Mauryan capital was renowned for its courtesans. Vātsāyana informs us that at the request of the 'hetairai' of Pāṭaliputra, Dottaka, who must have lived about the Maurya period, codified the chapter entitled Vaiśika, dealing with the courtesan's art. The 'Veśa' or the courtesans' quarters of Pāṭaliputra have received special mention in the *Chaturbhāṇi*, a work of the Gupta period, reflecting earlier traditions.

The *Kāmasūtra* is a unique treatise on the art of love, studied by men of taste, 'nāgarakas'. It is divided into seven parts; the first deals with generalities, the purpose of the book, the three ends of man, the sciences, the character of an elegant and the description of friends and go-betweens who help him in his intrigues. Part II, discusses the modes of enjoying love; Part III, relations with maidens, giving hints for courtships which imply a state of society in which child marriages were by no means universal, and marriage ceremonials, supplementing the information of the *Gṛihyasūtras*; Part IV discusses relations with married women; Part V, relations with the women of others; Part VI, hetairai; and Part VII, secret potions to secure love. (Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 468).

The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya is a work of unique merit with detailed information on polity and administration. Its author was Vishṇugupta Chāṇakya, the great political theorist and chief minister of Chandragupta Maurya. There seems to be no valid reason to doubt the statement made in the last verse of the treatise that it was compiled by Kauṭilya who seized the earth after exterminating the last Nanda king. There are 15 books, comprising 150 chapters, and 180 sections in a treatise with a total of 6000 ślokas. Kauṭilya refers to his own work as a compendium based on the treatises of nearly a dozen earlier authors. Some glimpses of the works of Bharadvāja (Kaṇika), Piśuna (Nārada) and Kauṇapadanta (Bhīshma) are preserved in the *Mahābhārata*, testifying to a long, old development of the science of state-craft (rāja-śāstra). The language of the *Arthaśāstra*, as has been handed down, is correct grammatical Sanskrit and abounds in rare words drawn from technical sciences. Such words as *devapatha*, *akranda*, *adhyaksha*, *yukta*, *maireya*, *kapisayana*, *yaujanasatika dūta*, *vyushta*, *purusha* and *hasti* measures, *parikheyi bhūmi*, *mahisha*, *upanishad* (in the sense of secret means) are common to Pāṇinī and Kauṭilya and indicate the relative proximity in time of the two authors. The *Arthaśāstra's* chapter on coins is a sure proof of its Mauryan date, there being no mention of a single coin of a subsequent culture-stratum. As a matter of fact, there is a close similarity between the numismatic data of Pāṇinī and that of the *Arthaśāstra*, both of which were based on the current silver Kārshāpaṇa, the standard coin of the Nanda and Mauryan periods.

An idea of the contents of this great work may be formed from the subjects of the fifteen books: (i) 'vinaya' or discipline; (ii) the duties of 'adhyakshas' who formed the steel framework of Mauryan

administration (as also shown by the edicts of Aśoka); (iii) civil law; (iv) criminal law and the punishment of criminals; (v) the conduct of courtiers, (vi) the seven elements of the politics of sovereign states and interstate relations; (vii) the end of the six-fold policy (shadguṇya); (viii) evils that may arise from a king's addiction to such vices as hunting, gambling, wenching and drinking; (ix) invasion; (x) the conduct of war; (xi) the sowing of dissension among political Saṅghas in order to destroy their unity; (xii) means for helping a weak king against a powerful enemy; (xiii) the capturing of a fortified city and securing the affection and loyalty of a conquered people; (xiv) the employment of secret means (aupanishadika), a chapter which has been the cause of calumny being heaped on the author; and lastly (xv) a plan of the work including the thirty-two methodological principles (Tantra-Yuktis) used in discussions and in compiling treatises.

The *Chhandas Sūtra* of Āchārya Piṅgala which deals with the metres of classical Sanskrit seems to have been compiled in the third century B.C. at the court at Pāṭaliputra, for Rājaśekhara makes the author a member of the learned metropolitan assembly, while according to the *Divyāvadāna* he was appointed by Bindusāra as teacher to Aśoka.

THE BUDDHIST CANON

The Pāli canon comprising the *Sutta Piṭaka* and the *Vinaya Piṭaka* had been compiled before the Mauryan period. Probably some books of the *Abhidhamma* like the *Dhammasaṅgani* and the *Vibhaṅga* had also been completed before the Third Council had rehearsed and finalized the canon. The most outstanding work of Aśoka's reign was *Kathāvathu*, the fruit of the labours of the Saṅgīti. It is a faithful record of the discussions and controversies that took place between the Theravādins and other sects. Moggaliputta Tissa, the President of the Saṅgīti, is the author.

Of the non-canonical Pāli literature, the *Milindapanha*, recording the meeting and conversation between the Greek king Menander and a celebrated Buddhist teacher Nāgasena, was, at least the earlier portions, compiled in the Śuṅga period, but far away in the Madra country without any direct influence from Pāṭaliputra.

The Mahāsaṅghikas in the post-Aśokan period were busy developing several articles of their faith, e.g., Buddha-bhakti, the doctrine of Pāramitās, the worship of Buddhist relics and of Buddha's own image. They also created a powerful literature first in what is called mixed or hybrid Sanskrit, and gradually in grammatically pure

Sanskrit. The Sarvāstivādin teachers active in the reign of Kanishka had also flourished a couple of centuries earlier and it is most likely that they had compiled a Vinaya (book of religious discipline) of their own. Dharmatrātā who lived in Kanishka's day, compiled an anthology. The nucleus of the *Mahāvastu*, a text of the Lokottaravādins of the Mahāsaṅghikas, was as old as the second century B.C. but was later enlarged in the fourth century A.D. The *Lalitavistara* was translated into Chinese for the first time as early as the first century A.D. Its present form seems to be a recast of an older Hīnayāna text of a biography of Buddha according to the Sarvāstivāda school. Similarly the longer *Sukhavativyuha* was translated into Chinese between A.D. 147-186. A Prajnāpāramitā text was translated as early as A.D. 179. The *Avadānaśataka* was translated into Chinese in the first half of the third century A.D., as were the *Saddharmapuṅdarīka* in A.D. 223 and the *Aśokāvadāna* between A.D. 281-306. All this literature must have been completed in its homeland in between the 2nd century B.C. and the 2nd century A.D.; but it is still uncertain as to how far the literary genius of Bihar participated in this creative urge.

THE JAINA CANON

It is said that when Bhadrabāhu migrated to South India, at the head of the Jaina monks, a Council was convened at Pāṭaliputra in the reign of Chandragupta Maurya. The assembled monks under the presidentship of Sthūlabhadra, who had a knowledge of all the old texts, fixed the canon. Although Bhadrabāhu on his return refused to recognize the canon fixed in his absence, the fact is the labours of the Council of Pāṭaliputra have remained in the Āgama texts of the Śvetāmbaras which have in all forty-five parts. It is true that the older material underwent a revision in a subsequent Council at Mathurā and later at Valabhi, but it was only a rehearsal and not a compiling of the texts *de novo*. The Ardhamāgadhi texts, as recited in the Pāṭaliputra Council, therefore, preserve the most ancient canonical traditions of the Jainas as we have them today. They comprise the eleven *Aṅgas*, the twelve *Upaṅgas*, the ten *Painnas* (Prakīrṇa or miscellaneous texts), the six *Chhedasūtras*, two individual texts, viz., the *Naṅdī* and the *Anuyogadvāra*, and the four *Mūlasūtras*. This voluminous literature is known as *Āgama* or *Siddhāṅta*. The language of the canon is known as Ārsha or Ardhamāgadhi, which Mahāvīra himself is said to have used for preaching.

The *Kalpasūtra*, the result of Bhadrabāhu's individual authorship, formed, in fact, the eighth section of the fourth *Chhedasūtra* entitled *Āyāradaśas* (the ten sections on behaviour). Bhadrabāhu is said to have been the sixth Thera after Mahāvīra and died 170 years after Mahāvīra's nirvāṇa. He is acclaimed as the spiritual preceptor of Chandragupta Maurya. There are three sections in the *Kalpasūtra*. Section I contains the Jina-charita, in which the biography of Mahāvīra is told in great detail, including the conception, the transference of the embryo, the birth, and the fourteen dreams of Devānanda, followed by Mahāvīra's life at home, his twelve years of asceticism, and his activity during the thirty years after he became a Kevalin. Section II deals with the Therāvali, i.e. the expansion of the Saṅghas into various Ganas, Śākhās, Kulas, and their spread over Bihar, Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Saurashtra. Section III containing the Samāchari or rules for the ascetics is probably the oldest nucleus of the *Kalpasūtra*.

D. Economic Conditions

The conditions in Mauryan India indicate an exceptional boom in agricultural production and an unusual activity in handicrafts. The government maintained model farms for the supply of various seeds and also interested itself in the cultivation of commercial crops like cotton and jute. Agricultural labour was employed on the basis of free food and wages. The State also maintained cattle-farms. Great attention was paid to irrigation, and fresh sources of water were got by digging canals and tanks. There was a special department for public utility works. Forest resources were tapped for revenue and an adequate conservator staff operated.

Gold, silver, diamonds, other gems and inferior metals like copper, lead, tin and iron were mined as government monopolies under the special care of an officer called Khanyādhyaksha (officer for digging). In Mauryan times, there was a state-run workshop called the Akshaśāla, where gold and silver articles were made under the supervision of an officer called a Sauvarṇika.

Besides the State's organization of industry as envisaged in the *Arthaśāstra*, there was a widespread organization of handicrafts in the form of guilds (śreṇis) each under its own Alderman (jetthaka). The craft-guilds are said to have been eighteen in number, such as those of the wood-workers, the smiths, the leather-dressers, the painters, the workers in stone, the ivory-carvers, the weavers, the

jewellers, the confectioners, the potters, and so on. These were the various śilpas (crafts) actively thriving in towns as well as in the countryside, where such professions were known as 'janapadi vṛitti'. Proficiency in these arts counted towards social distinction.

The manufactured products were handled for both inland and foreign trade by merchant-guilds, whose members were called Śetthi and their president Mahāśetthi. They became organized as Sārthavāha merchants in order to ply their trade through caravan-traffic either individually or as a co-operative enterprise. The caravans comprised as many as 500 carts loaded with varied merchandise and treaded their way across the country day and night under the direction of land-pilots (sthala-niryāmaka) and under guard by escorts (gaulmika) against the danger of dacoits, turbulent foresters and others. Trade was taxed all along the way by export and import duties, octroi and excise collected in the octroi-posts (śulka-śālā). The State derived a substantial share of income from the Custom Houses called 'śaulkaśālikā' revenue. Utmost attention was paid to the safety of trade-routes by land (sthala-patha) and water (vāri-patha). Pāṇinī speaks of the Grand Trunk Road as Uttarāpatha (northern way). This was the royal road leading from Taxila to Pāṭaliputra, with two sectors at either end, the western sector linking it with Pushkalāvati, Kapiśa and Bāhlika, and the eastern via Champā with Tāmralipti on the sea coast. Megasthenes had himself travelled to Pāṭaliputra by this road which he calls the 'Northern Route'. Aśoka gave much attention to the maintenance of roads, the planting of shady trees, the digging of wells, and the provision of comfortable rest-houses for travellers.

There was also a trade route from Śrāvasti to Rājgṛiha via Vaiśālī which crossed the Gangā at Pāṭaliputra, and entered the heart of Magadha. Rājgṛiha was also connected with Ujjaini in the west and Pratishthāna on the Godāvari, through the valley of the Son and its tributary; the Jyotiratha (modern Johita) and Pratishthāna were further connected with Bharukachchha and Surparaka on the west coast. Sāketa, Kauśāmbī and Vārānasi were linked to Pāṭaliputra on the Gangā and thence to the sea by river traffic open to ships heavy and big enough to accommodate 500 merchants.

Merchandise included gold, silver, pearls, gems, diamonds, coral, sandalwood, aloe, rich floor coverings, rugs, blankets, silk, linen,

cotton fabrics, and so on. Outgoing merchants with goods were called Dravyaka, while those returning with cash were known as Vasnaka.

The Nanda emperors are credited with standardizing weights and measures, to meet the exigencies of the first empire. The earliest punch-marked Kārshāpaṇa coins with a regular group of five symbols and a standard weight of 32 ratti, was introduced by the Nanda emperors, as available specimens show. The Mauryan kings continued this coinage system both in silver and copper, the weight of the latter Kārshāpaṇa being 16 māsās of 5 ratti each. Ardhas (½), Padas (¼), Ashtabhaṅgas (⅛), Māśakas ($\frac{1}{16}$) were coins of lower denomination linked to the standard Kārshāpaṇa both in silver and copper, the weight of the former standard being 32 and of the latter 80 rattis.

Agricultural prices touched rock bottom in the Mauryan period, necessitating the minting of extremely small new coins, called Kakani and Ardha-Kakani in the *Vārtikas* of Kātyāyaṇa. A Kārshāpaṇa of silver could purchase five goni-fulls of corn, equal to 12 mds. 32 seers. The following Table shows at a glance the effective purchasing power of these coins:—

Name of Coin	*No. of Silver Māsās*	*Wt. in Ratti of Silver*	*Purchasing Power in Corn*
Kārshāpaṇa	16	32	12 mds.
½ Ardha	8	16	6 mds. 16 srs.
¼ Pada	4	8	3 mds. 8 srs.
⅛ Ashtabhanga	2	4	1 md. 24 srs.
$\frac{1}{16}$ Raupya Māśaka	1	2	32 srs.
$\frac{1}{32}$ Ardha-Māśaka	½	1	16 srs.
$\frac{1}{64}$ Kakani	¼	½	8 srs.
$\frac{1}{128}$ Ardha-Kakani	⅛	¼	4 srs.

The *Addhamāśaka Jātaka* (*Jat.* iii. 449 ff.) shows how in real life poor people set great value on the paltry saving even of Ardha-Māśaka.

The punch-marked coins of the Nanda and Mauryan periods continued in circulation up to the end of the Gupta period. From about the second century B.C. onwards they became Purāṇa, i.e. antique coins, as distinct from the new Suṅga coins of the cast variety which also have been found in large numbers. However, both seem to have been circulating in perfect economic harmony.

It may be noted that the *Arthaśāstra* envisaged a comprehensive control on the economic life of the people even in those early days. There was practically no aspect of the economic life of the country that was not in some way or another sought to be controlled, planned and regulated. A brief but clear idea of this aspect has been already given in the foregoing chapter. It is indeed somewhat surprising that the penetrating genius of Kauṭilya could work out such details and think of a comprehensive control of the economic life of a people whose communications were so meagre and whose administrative machinery was still in the making.

E. The Fine Arts

Mauryan art ushers in an era of magnificent monuments executed in stone. It is certain that there existed a pre-Maurya Indian art of sculpture and architecture in wood, clay modelling, ivory carving, cutting of hard stone, glass, textiles and metal work, as manifested by the numerous literary references in the Vedic, Buddhist and Jaina literatures. The Brāhmaṇas refer to 'deva-śilpa' and to its imitation (anukṛiti) *mānusha-śilpa* while Pāṇinī mentions the symbols (rūpa and lakshaṇa) punched on coins, and the incisions in the ears of cows to indicate ownership. We are in fact familiar with the vast ensemble of symbols on the punch-marked coins of the Nanda period and also with the decorative motifs on pre-Mauryan pottery. But during the period from about the tenth century B.C. to the third century B.C., India was an integral part of an 'Ancient East', extending from the Mediterranean to the Ganges Valley, that was the cradle of cultural exchanges and the migration of art motifs and religious cults. This explains the presence in the earliest historic art of North India of such symbols and motifs as winged lions (pakshagamāh-siṁhah), centaurs (kinnaras), imaginary animals (īhā-mṛiga) like griffons (vyāla), tritons (mahoraga), animals affronted and addorsed, battlement friezes (kapisirshaka), the tree of life (Śrīvṛiksha), palmetto (tālapatra), honeysuckle-fretwork (jāla with gavāksha or kuñjarāksha design), spirals (āvarta nābhi), and

so on. The Janapada period witnessed an unusual activity among craftsmen (śilpīns) who were organized into eighteen traditional guilds, such as those of the carpenters, the builders, the stone-cutters, the metal-workers, the smiths, the leather-workers, the potters, and others. Building as well as sculpture was all in wood which, having continued for several centuries prior to the change-over to stone, made Mauryan art the expression of civilized and sophisticated artistic traditions. In the *Kāśikā* occurs an ancient example of the Kāshtha-sabhā (an assembly-hall of timber), while Greek accounts speak of cities made of wood. Pāṇinī (V.1.50) refers to traders moving about from place to place with their stock of wooden pillars (sthūṇa) and stone slabs (aśma).

We have the evidence of early Pāli texts and of Kauṭilya for the development of city-architecture under expert 'vatthuvijjāchāryas' or civil engineers, also called 'nagara-vaddhaki', assisted by other carpenters (vaddhaki) and bricklayers (ishṭaka-vaddhaki). They would first find a pleasant site and, having cleared it thoroughly, would proceed 'to build there a city fine and regular, measured out into quarters, with excavated moats (parikhā) and ramparts (prākāra) about it, with stout gateways (dvāra-kotthaka) and towers (attālaka), with market-places (chatvāra), cross-roads (antar-mārga), street-corners (vīthi), and public squares (siṅghāṭaka), with clean and even main roads with regular lines of open shops (āpana), well-provided with parks (udyāna), gardens (ārāma), lakes (tālāka), lotus-ponds (pushkariṇī), and wells (udapāna), adorned with many kinds of temples of gods (devasthāna).' A good city was also provided with halls, arenas for sport (kṛidā-śālā), monasteries (ponna-śālā), almonries (dāna-śālā), elephant-stables (hātthi-śālā), drinking saloons (pānāgāra), cook-shops (odanīya-ghara) and so on. Kauṭilya in describing the construction of a fortified city of an identical plan uses an advanced terminology. The great cities of Mauryan India, such as Massaga (Maśakavatī), Takshaśilā, Śākala and above all Pāṭaliputra, struck the Greeks with their beautiful planning and elaborate architecture. According to Megasthenes who lived there, Pāṭaliputra was built on the confluence of the Ganges and the Son. The city was oblong in shape, of 80 'stades' (9¼ miles) in length, and of 15 stades (1 mile and 1270 yards) in breadth. It was protected by a moat and by a massive timber palisade furnished with 64 gates and 570 towers. Excavations have brought to light portions of Pāṭaliputra's wooden palisade. Patañjali

makes specific mention of the lofty buildings, probably those of the royal palace, and the parapets of the city of Pāṭaliputra ('Pāṭaliputrakāh prāsādāh', 'Pāṭaliputrakāh prākārāh'). The Mauryan palace built by Chandragupta existed in all its splendour at the time of Megasthenes and its magnificence impressed him much more than did the palaces of Susa and Ecbatana. He was specially impressed with the Mauryan Pillared Hall (Pl. V. Fig. 12, 13) which may have been inspired by the Hall of a Hundred Columns erected at Persepolis by Darius the Great. Excavations have exposed an extensive Assembly Chamber erected on eighty-four pillars, which can be identified only with the Chandragupta sabhā mentioned by Patañjali. The Greek accounts speak of the Hall of Audience in the palace of Chandragupta, while Kauṭilya urges the king to attend to public business there for three hours every day. The pillars of the sabhā have been found mostly in fragments, but at least one pillar is preserved in almost perfect condition. It has a bright glossy polish, is without base or capital, and bears the characteristic Mauryan mark, viz., 'crescent of chaitya' at its foot.

Scholars have drawn a distinction between the official or court art, and the purely indigenous art, of the period. Of the latter, the most conspicuous examples from Bihar are the two Yaksha statues (Pl. VIII. Fig. 18) found at Patna and now preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. They are made of the buff-coloured sandstone of Chunār quarries, as are all other Mauryan sculptures, and bear its distinctive metallic polish. In style they fit in admirably with the folk-art tradition of the Yaksha statues found at Parkham, Pawaya, Besnagar, and other places, being frontally conceived in colossal size and massive structure. Prof. Jayaswal held that they were portrait statues of Ajātaśatru and Udayin, but Prof. Rama Prasad Chandra read the short epigraphs on them as 'Bhage Achachhanivika' and 'Yakha Sarvatanandi', which identifies them as the statues of two Yakshas, Akshatamirka and Sarvatanandi.

The Yakshi statue of Didarganj (Pl. VIII. Fig. 19) near Patna is exactly in the same tradition, representing the highest watermark of sculptural art in the indigenous tradition. The image holds a 'chauri' in her raised right hand and the lower part of her body is covered with ornaments and folded garments. There is nothing archaic or primitive, but a conscious urban beauty that became the prototype of the numerous female figures carved on the railing pillars of the Śuṅga and Kushāna periods. It is an example of the art

of the transitional period between the Maurya and Śuṅga epochs.

The court art of Aśoka's reign is chiefly presented by the monolithic pillars (śaila staṁbha) executed under the Emperor's direct orders. These columns consist of tall shafts crowned by capitals supporting some animal figures. They are made of Chunār sandstone of a very pleasing colour and the shining polish richly enhances their beauty. They have been found over a large area extending from Rupar in Ambala district to Sāñchi and Bihar. The most beautiful of all the pillars is the Sārnāth one (Pl. VII. Fig. 17) erected on the spot where the Buddha preached his First Sermon. A Dharmachakra once rested on the heads of four addorsed lions, seated on a round abacus bearing in relief an elephant, horse, bull and lion separated by four smaller decorative Dharmachakras. Below the abacus is a bulging vase covered with overflowing lotus petals. The symbolism has been variously explained, but it seems to be an embodiment of the formula later to become explicit in the Buddha image. The Dharmachakra at the top is a universally accepted symbol for the Buddha or his Dharma-kāyā. The majestic lions represent the lion-seat (siṁhāsana) of the Chakravarti on which the Buddha images were invariably seated. The drum symbolizes the Anotatta lake with its four channels opening out towards the four points of the compass, designated as Siṁhamukha, Hasthīmukha, Aśvamukha and Usabhamukha. The four animals of the abacus clearly point to the intended symbolism. Just as the bigger Dharmachakra stood for the Buddha, the smaller wheels stand for the other Buddhas, 'Pachcheka Buddhas', who dwell on the banks of the lake and drink its ambrosial waters. It is clearly stated in the *Miliṅda-panha* that just as the water of the Anotatta entering the great ocean never turns back, so the Bodhisattva in his last birth, would never turn back from his purpose of becoming another Buddha so that he might become a Chakravarti. It is thus the ascent to, and the attainment of, the Buddha ideal by the Bodhisattava from the state of a Chakravarti that is represented. The gods gave Aśoka sixteen jars of water from the Anotatta lake for his daily use, of which he gave eight to the Bhikshusaṅgha, two to the sixty thousand monks reciting the *Tripiṭaka,* two to his queen and kept four for himself. This stately column with its magnificent capital must have been erected after the Third Council where the imperial command against schisms had been issued and when Aśoka had found himself

at the height of his glory due to his unique success in the secular and religious fields.

Several Aśokan columns in Bihar should be specially noted: for example, the inscribed pillars at Lauriya-Arārāj, Lauriya-Nandangarh (Pl. VI. Fig. 16) and Rāmpurwa (with a lion capital, Pl. VI. Fig. 14) and the pillars without any inscription such as the one at Basārh-Bakhira (with a lion capital) and the one at Rāmpurwa (with a bull capital, Pl. VI. Fig. 15). A fragmentary capital with Mauryan polish and of Mauryan date showing four bulls seated back to back, was found at Hajipur in Muzaffarpur district and is now in the Patna Museum. Recently a fragmentary Aśokan capital and fragments of a couchant bull have been unearthed in the city of Patna itself, proving thereby that modern Patna stands on the very site of ancient Pāṭaliputra. Other architectural remains of Aśoka's reign include the altar (Bodhi-mañcha) at Bodh Gaya, which is supported on four small pilasters exactly as represented in a Bhārhut relief.

Bihar has also preserved the earliest examples of rock-cut chaitya-halls. A group of four caves is situated at Barābar, 16 miles north of Gaya. One cave called the Sudāma or Nyagrodha cave bears an inscription of the twelfth year of Aśoka's reign and consequently is the oldest cave-architecture in India. It consists of two apartments: an outer one 32 feet 9 inches long and 19 feet 6 inches broad; and beyond this a nearly circular apartment 19 feet 11 inches by 19 feet, in place of the usual solid stūpa. Another cave called Karṇa Chaupar bears an inscription recording the date of its origin as the nineteenth year of Aśoka's reign. It is simply a rectangular hall measuring 33 feet 6 inches by 14 feet and having an arched roof. The most interesting of the group, however, is the Lomaśa Ṛishi cave which with its decorated facade is an accurate reproduction of the gable end of a wooden structure chiselled into the rock-face. The arched aperture above the doorway is occupied by a procession of exquisitely carved elephants doing obeisance to a stūpa. The interior of the cave is a hall 33 feet by 19 feet, beyond which is an oval-shaped apartment. In all these caves, the interior is polished like glass.

Three-quarters of a mile to the north-east of this group of caves is a ridge of granite, known as Nāgārjuni Hill, which has three excavated caves, each bearing an inscription of Daśaratha, dedicating the caves to the Ajīvikas. The largest is the Gopikā or 'milkmaid's cave', a tunnel-like hall 46 feet 5 inches long, with circular

ends, and 19 feet 2 inches wide, with one door in the centre of the south side. The roof is vaulted and the whole interior highly polished.

About 13 miles south of Rājgṛiha, 25 miles east of Gaya, is yet another small cave, called Sitāmarhi. It consists of a chamber rectangular in shape, measuring 15 feet 9 inches, by 11 feet 3 inches, and is hollowed out of a single isolated granite boulder. The inside of the cave is as carefully polished as any of those at Barābar, and must therefore be assigned to the Mauryan age.

At Lohanipur near Bankipur, in the Patna district, were found at the same level two nude torsos representing Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras, one of which is highly polished (Pl. VIII. Fig. 20). They both show the stiff modelling common to Jaina images in a Kāyotsarga (leaving the body) pose. Their archaic appearance belongs to the indigenous tradition of the Parkham and Patna Yakshas. One of them has the typical Mauryan polish and is considered the earliest image in the iconography of the historic period.

The art tradition of the Śuṅga-Kāṇva period followed the cultural ideology of Buddhism, as it evolved in an eclectic form, by freely assimilating folk cults. The Stūpa, Yakshas and Nāgas were its main subjects. The erection of monumental stūpas with elaborate railings and gateways became the chief pattern of art expression until it was replaced by the image enshrined in a temple. Stūpas were enlarged and cordoned off by railings (vedika) with four gateways (toraṇa) facing four different directions. The best examples of this are at Bhārhut and Sāñchi where Mahāchaityas had existed from Aśokan and probably even earlier times. In Bihar the holy Bodhi Tree of Bodh Gaya was embellished with an elaborately carved railing, one of the most important monuments in the whole of the Buddhist architecture of Magadha. Originally there was the Bodhi-ghara, i.e. a shrine of the Bodhi Tree, built in the reign of Aśoka. It was enclosed by a sculptured railing and entered from the east through a toraṇa gateway. In the courtyard stood an Aśokan lion-pillar flanked on either side by a Yaksha statue. The Bodhi-ghara was later replaced by a straight-edged 'śikhara' (pinnacle) temple with a Buddha image. This is proved by the so-called 'Bodh Gaya plaque' found at Kumhrār, Patna, and now in the Patna Museum, which bears a Kharoshthi inscription which seems to have been a memento prepared on the spot in answer to the request of some visitor from the north-west in the late Kushān or early Gupta period, who eventually seems to have left it behind where it was found.

The Bodh Gaya railings enclose a rectangular area measuring 145 feet by 108 feet, which is now very obscure. Its dimensions could be obtained only by excavating the foundations of the railings. The pillars are each 5 feet 8 inches high, standing on a plinth and capped at the top by a coping, the inner faces of which are ornamented with long lines of animals—elephants, deer, bulls, winged horses, makaras, centaurs, and others; on the outer faces are carved wreaths of flowers. Each pillar is decorated at the top and at the bottom with a semi-circular medallion showing a single figure or a group of figures, and with a central circular disc depicting either an animal or a human bust in the centre of a lotus. The cross-bars between the upright pillars also have circular lotus flowers on both sides, and even some busts or animals. On several of the pillars there are short epigraphs showing that the railing was the gift of a queen named Kuraṅgi (ayaye Kuraṅgiye dānam). Another inscription refers to a gift by Nāgadevī, the second queen of king Brahmamitra.

It seems that during the Kushāna period, ancient monuments were more or less well-preserved and architectural or sculptural activity was limited. We have a fine Mithuna couple under an Aśoka tree in the best Mathurā style, revealing a passionate sensuous feeling. The sculpture however is in buff sandstone which indicates that it may have been the work of local artists. But with the coming of Kanishka's rule to Bihar, art exchanges between Bihar and Mathurā were inevitable, as is shown by the discovery of several works of sculpture in typical Mathurā red sandstone, both in Patna and Rājgṛiha. The sculptured slab at Rājgṛiha with the figure of Manināga and his sister, Sumāgadhi, is a fine example of Kushāna art.

Aesthetic appreciation of the achievements of indigenous Magadhan artists is increased when one takes into account the large number of terracotta figurines of the Maurya down to the Kushāna period, as found at Bulandibāgh (1912-16), Kumhrār (1922-28), Patna (1935-36), Buxar (1925, 1927) and Basārh or Vaiśālī (1903, 1912). The two fine examples of the Laughing Boy (Pl. VIII. Fig. 21) and the Laughing Girl acquaint us with the new quality of plastic handling that the artists had discovered. But the most powerful aesthetic appeal lies in the large group of female figures in dancing costume in a variety of poses (Pl. IX. Fig. 23). There is an irresistible feeling that with these coquettish beauties wearing gorgeous head-dresses, flounced skirts and jewelled ornaments one is face to face

with those matchless courtesans of ancient Pāṭaliputra whom artists have immortalized in some of their most voluptuous poses. The two young damsels from Bulandibāgh (Nos. 8510 and 4177 in Patna Museum) and the youthful figure from Patna wearing an elaborate bejewelled girdle and tasselled scarf (9473) are exciting types.



VIII

POLITICAL HISTORY AND ADMINISTRATION, A.D. 319—750

THE RISE OF THE GUPTAS

A GOLDEN chapter in the history of India opens with the rise of the Gupta empire in Bihar. The imperial Gupta genealogy begins with Mahārājā Srīgupta, the great-grandfather of Samudragupta. As Chandragupta the father of Samudragupta assumed the title of Mahārājādhirājā in A.D. 319 Srīgupta may be placed in the latter half of the 3rd century A.D.

There is much uncertainty about the location of the original kingdom of the Guptas. Some place it in Magadha and some in West Bengal. In fact, the home of the Guptas may be located somewhere in Uttar Pradesh. Mahārājā Gupta and his son Ghatotkacha were minor rulers. But Ghatotkacha's son Chandragupta I set the dynasty on the road to imperial greatness. He ruled not only over the Gangā-Jamunā Doab and Sāketa (Ayodhyā) but also brought Magadha under his sway. The statement in the Purāṇas about the enjoyment by Guptas of the countries along the Ganges, Sāketa and Magadha, refers to the period of Chandragupta I. He was greatly helped by the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī, in establishing his authority over Magadha and the imperial city of Pāṭaliputra. They entered into a matrimonial alliance also with him by marrying the Lichchhavi princess Kumāradevī to Chandragupta I. The vital role played by the Lichchhavis in the growth of Gupta power is clear from the fact that the figure of the princess Kumāradevī with the legends 'Kumāradevī' and 'Lichchhavyāh' appear on the Chandragupta-Kumāradevī coins along with Chandragupta I, and that in all official Gupta records, including his own Allahabad pillar inscription, Samudragupta is

proudly referred to as 'Lichchhavidauhitrah' (maternal grandson of the Lichchhavis). Chandragupta I after his coronation at Pāṭaliputra assumed the title of Mahārājādhirājā and may have started the Gupta era in February A.D. 320.

CONQUESTS OF SAMUDRAGUPTA

Chandragupta I had nominated his son Samudragupta to succeed him. But the title of Samudragupta was contested by his brother Kacha, whose gold coins have been found. Samudragupta tided over the crisis and was well established on the throne by *c.* A.D. 335. He inherited the dominions of both his father and maternal grandfather. He proved to be one of the greatest warrior kings of ancient India. Samudragupta first turned his attention to Northern India, and he uprooted Rudradeva, Matela Nāgadatta, Chandravarman, Ganapati-Nāga, Nāgasena, Achyuta, Balavarman and many other kings of Āryāvarta, and annexed their territories. He thus became the sole master of the entire Gangetic valley including Bengal. The chiefs of the forest tracts of Chotanagpur and Madhya Pradesh were reduced to vassalage. He invaded the Eastern Deccan and forced the rulers of the region to acknowledge him as their sovereign though their territories were not annexed. The bordering kingdoms on the north-west and north-east and the tribal states of the Punjab, Western India, Mālwa and Central India paid him tribute in various ways. These kingdoms were Samatata (part of Bengal), Dāvaka, Kāmarūpa (Assam), Nepal, Kartṛipura (in Jullunder district) and republican clans such as the Mālawas, Arjunāyanas, Yaudheyas, Mādvakas, Abhīras, Prārjunas, Sanakānikas, Kākas, and Kharparikas. Śaka-Kushāna chiefs of Mālwa, Saurashtra, West Punjab and the North-West Frontier accepted him as their overlord. Thus Samudragupta re-established the political unity of India to a large extent, though a large part of the country recognized only his formal suzerainty. The foreign rulers saved themselves from possible extinction by hastening to offer submission. In the Central and Western Deccan, the Vākātakas maintained their independent power. The rulers of the Eastern Deccan and the forest tracts of U.P. and Eastern Central India accepted the Gupta Emperor as their overlord. Thus it is not absolutely true to say that Samudragupta proved to be 'the binder' of the entire earth (Dharaṇī bandha), but he was the champion of the centripetal forces which had had no chance since the disintegration of the Mauryan empire. Pāṭaliputra again became the capital

of a large empire. Samudragupta celebrated his military success by performing a horse sacrifice and his Aśvamedha-type of gold coins corroborate the epigraphic evidence about this matter.

Samudragupta maintained friendly relations with neighbouring foreign kingdoms. Meghavarmā, the king of Ceylon, wanted to build a monastery in Bodh Gaya for the Ceylonese pilgrims and Samudragupta willingly gave permission and necessary facilities. Thus Samudragupta continued the traditional Indian policy of political integration at home and international friendship and co-operation with foreign powers.

Samudragupta was a versatile genius. He not only proved to be a great conqueror, which has earned for him the epithet of the Indian Napoleon, but was also an accomplished poet and musician. Some of his gold coins show him playing on a Veeṇā (stringed instrument) and it is possible that he composed a few of the metrical verses engraved on his gold coins.

CHANDRAGUPTA II

According to official Gupta inscriptions, Chandragupta II succeeded Samudragupta and came to the throne in A.D. 375-76. He started from Pāṭaliputra with his minister Śaba and a large army towards the west for the conquest of Mālwa and Saurashtra which were under Śāka rule. He tried to win the goodwill of the Vākātakas, who were rulers of a large part of Madhya-Pradesh and N. W. Deccan. He married his daughter Prabhāvatigupta to Rudrasena II, son of the Vākātaka king Prithvisena I. We do not know whether the Vākātakas actually helped him in his campaign against the Sākas, but there is no doubt that the campaign was successful. The provinces of Mālwa and Gujerat, with important seaports, became parts of the Gupta empire. As Chandragupta Maurya had liberated Indian territory from the clutches of the Greeks, so his namesake Chandragupta II exterminated the traces of foreign rule from W. India. In the far north-west also he appears to have won some victory against the remaining Kushāna chiefs, for the Mehrauli iron pillar inscription refers to Chandra's occupation of Bālhika. Chandra has been generally identified with Chandragupta II and Bālhika either with Bactria or a place in the Punjab.

Though Ujjaini became a very important and favourite city of Chandragupta II, Pāṭaliputra remained the imperial capital. The Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien, who visited Bihar during this period, refers

to the good government of the king and the prosperous condition of the people. This is confirmed by a large variety of fine gold coins of high purity issued by Chandragupta II, who had assumed the title of Vikramāditya. Chandragupta II was a great patron of arts and letters, and tradition mentions that nine 'gems', that is, nine highly learned men, lived in his court. Some of them were, however, certainly later than his period. Kālidāsa is believed to have been his contemporary. Chandragupta II was a devotee of Vishṇu, but he followed a policy of religious toleration and appointed Buddhists and Śaivas as ministers and high officers.

KUMĀRAGUPTA I

In A.D. 412-13 Chandragupta II was succeeded by his son Kumāragupta I, born of Mahādevī Dhruvadevī. He maintained the Gupta empire intact and he may have attempted to push beyond the Narmadā, as is suggested by a large hoard of Gupta coins found in Sātārā (Bombay State). Numerous new varieties of beautiful gold coins issued by him bear eloquent testimony to the economic prosperity and political stability of his empire, extending from Saurashtra to Bengal, and from the Himalayas to the Vindhyas.

The last years of Kumāragupta I were not happy. Pushyamitra, living in the region of Mekala near the source of the Narmadā, struck hard at the Gupta empire and prince Skandagupta had a bad time. But he finally overcame the crisis. Skandagupta had also to deal with the Hūṇas who invaded the Gupta dominion from the north-west. It appears that Skandagupta was the ablest of the sons of Kumāragupta I, who therefore nominated him as his successor in preference to either of his other sons Purugupta and Ghatotkachagupta. But while Skandagupta was out of the capital engaged in military campaigns, Kumāragupta I died in 455. Skandagupta on his return reported his success to his mother Devakī who, with tears in her eyes, found happiness in her worthy son.

DECLINE AND FALL OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

The Gupta empire, the dynasty and the country were, at this time passing through a critical period. Besides the internal disturbances caused by dynastic squabbles for succession between the royal princes, defiance by feudatories or governors of border provinces, and the Hūṇa menace, were all there. The crisis demanded a valiant warrior and an efficient organizer who could save the tottering

empire and the dynasty. Skandagupta proved to be the man of the hour, The Junāgarh inscription clearly states that the goddess Lakshmī selected him as her lord, rejecting all the other sons of the King (Manujendraputram). His victory over the Hūṇas was so resounding that even children sang his praise. He kept under control the provincial governors whom he appointed after due care. Before A.D. 461, complete peace and tranquillity reigned in the empire. He maintained it intact, and administered benevolently. His epithet 'Parahitakāri' on some silver coins was very apt. In gratitude for the favour of Śrī Lakshmī, the goddess of prosperity, he issued the King-and-Lakshmī type of gold coins.

Skandagupta, who reigned during the years A.D. 456-470 (his last known date is A.D. 468), ranks as one of the greatest of Indian monarchs. He tided over a series of serious crises that nearly overwhelmed him and the country.

He secured not only his position on the throne and saved the empire and the dynasty from disruption (vichalita kulalakshmī), but also warded off the Hūṇa menace. Rightly he assumed the titles of Kramāditya and Vikramāditya. He was also the fountain-head of a benevolent administration in which no one failed in his duties: 'there is no one who is distressed in poverty or in misery or is avaricious or who, when worthy of punishment, is subjected to excessive torture.' In view of his high character, ability, heroism and courage, and his regard for the welfare of the people, which was proved by his repairs to the dam of Sudarśana lake in Saurashtra, we are disposed to agree with a Buddhist author of the 8th-9th century that he was the 'best, wisest and most religious-minded king (Śreshthāh buddhimān dharmavatsalāh) in that decadent age (yugadhāme)'. Verily he was a national hero. That is why in a contemporary epigraph he is regarded as the most eminent hero in the lineage of the Guptas.

He was succeeded in A.D. 470 by Kumāragupta II who was either the son of Skandagupta or of Purugupta. Kumāragupta II issued gold coins of fairly good metal and with marginal legends. Like Skandagupta, he also assumed the title of Kramāditya and ruled over Mālwa and the Gangetic valley. His reign came to an end in 475.

He was succeeded by Buddhagupta, who is known from a votive image inscription at Sārnāth to have been 'ruling the earth' in 476. Buddhagupta was the son of Purugupta and Mahādevī Chandrādevī,

and his seal has been found in Nālandā where he built a Saṅghārāma. He continued to rule over the empire extending from East Mālwa in the west to North Bengal in the east, where his inscriptions have been found. He issued gold coins with the epithet Vikramāditya, besides issuing silver coins. His last known date is 496.

Buddhagupta was the last great king of the imperial Gupta dynasty. Either during the last years of his reign or immediately after his death, the empire was reduced in size and power. Valabhi (Saurashtra) was now virtually independent under the Maitraka dynasty. The Hūṇas overran the country and were masters of East Mālwa. His successor Narasiṁhagupta, another son of Purugupta, could not prevent the Hūṇas under Toramāna and his son Mihirakula, from laying waste even the heart of the empire, including Magadha. It appears that the Hūṇas overran even Gauḍa. Narasiṁhagupta was defeated. There is no denying the fact that Toramāna dealt a heavy blow to the prestige of the Gupta empire. In Bengal, Vainya Gupta assumed an independent status and issued gold coins with the epithet Dvādaśāditya. His seal has been found in Nālandā. He was certainly a Gupta prince and might have been directly encouraged by the Hūṇa invader to assert his sovereignty against Narasiṁhagupta Bālāditya, who was defeated by the Hūṇa leader. But Vainya Gupta's authority was short-lived. In Bengal, he was overthrown by Gopachandra.

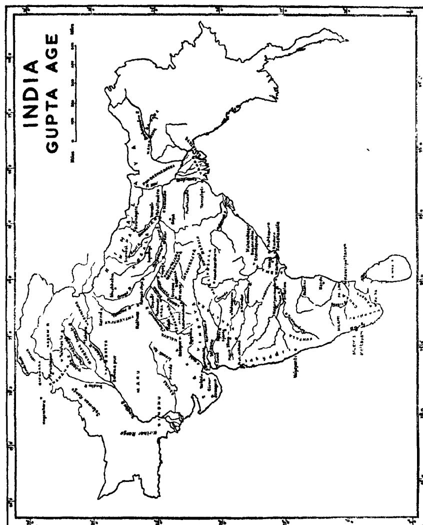
Narasiṁhagupta however, reasserted his authority in Magadha in 514-15. He came out of enforced exile and made peace with Mihirakula to whom he agreed to pay tribute. He issued a baser type of gold coins of lower purity with the epithet Bālāditya. But Bālāditya had to face another Hūṇa invasion. Mihirakula was behaving like a tyrant and he had ordered a general persecution of the Buddhists throughout his dominions. Narasiṁhagupta was a devout Buddhist and he resented this order for the persecution of Buddhists. He had won the love and affection of the people by his good and beneficent administration. He planned orchards, reservoirs, gardens, roads and bridges. The proud people of Magadha must have been upset over the prospect of the Hūṇa invasion. They always had sympathy for Buddhism, so both the pro-Buddhist king and his royal subjects decided to defy the Hūṇa suzerainty. Religious persecution of Buddhism became the *casus belli*. Mihirakula started with a large cavalry force to invade Magadha and punish its king who had dared defy him. Bālāditya, though supported by millions of his subjects, wisely

withdrew, leaving the imperial city under some generals to defend it against Mihirakula. With a large army he resorted to guerilla tactics in the forest areas and swampy tracts. Pāṭaliputra was beseiged by the Hūṇas, but was strongly defended by deep moats full of water and by able generals, probably led by Kṛishṇagupta or his son Harshagupta. Mihirakula, ultimately allured by Bālāditya, proceeded to the swampy country (Deltaic Bengal) and was surprised by the Gupta king and his soldiers. They suddenly surrounded and took Mihirakula alive as a captive and presented him to Bālāditya (A.D. 520). Upon the intervention of his mother, Bālāditya released Mihirakula and allowed him to rule over some small kingdom in the north.

Thus Narasiṁhagupta Bālāditya shook off the yoke of Hūṇa servitude and saved Buddhism in Madhyadeśa from a terrible calamity. His services to the Buddhist religion and learning were manifold. He built a monastery in Nālandā. Yuan Chwang had stayed in the 'college' of Bālāditya. He also constructed a temple where he placed an image of Buddha. That temple with its tall Śikhara (pinnacle) touching the sky, was existing in all its glory in the 8th century A.D, as is proved by epigraphic evidence. Bālāditya was of a religious bent of mind. He called a congregation of Buddhist priests, including those from China, in his newly-built monastery at Nālandā and declared himself to be a 'bhikshu'. He decided to stay in Nālandā where he died.

His abdication of the throne must be placed soon after his success over Mihirakula. He was succeeded by his son Kumāragupta III in 522. Seals of Narasiṁhagupta Bālāditya have been found in Nālandā and Bhitāri (Ghazipur district, U.P.) and his coins in large numbers in the Kālighāt hoards. This would show that he exercised authority over eastern U.P., Bihar, and West Bengal. His gold coins are heavier in weight and of less purity. All these show the growing weakness and poverty of the empire, which was rudely shaken by the Hūṇa invasions. Kumāragupta III was not the man to stem the tide of decline and he proved no match to the newly rising meteor, Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana, who started on a 'digvijaya' from Daśapura or Mandasore in West Mālwa. Yaśodharman defeated Mihirakula in the north and forced him to submit. In the east, he carried his victorious arms to the Lauhitya (the Brahmaputra) and he claimed to have annexed those countries which were outside the Gupta empire. We have seen that the Gupta emperors were lords of Mālwa, but Yaśodharman-Vishṇuvardhana had in his

Map IV



eastern campaign also overrun the Gupta territories such as Bengal, and one of the mighty kings of the East who is said to have perished at the hands of Yaśodharman in A.D. 530-1 might have been the Gupta king Kumāragupta himself.

Kumāragupta III was succeeded by his son Vishṇugupta Chandrāditya, whose seal has been found in Nālandā. Very crude and heavy gold coins of much debased metal struck by him have been discovered in large numbers from the Kālighāt hoard. A copper-plate grant found at Dāmodarpura in Bengal is dated in the Gupta year 224 (A.D. 543-44), and it probably belongs to the period of Vishṇugupta. The sovereign is referred to in it as Pṛithvīpati Paramadaivata Paramabhattāraka Mahārājādhirāja, who is to be identified with Vishṇugupta. But in spite of the high-sounding titles, there is no doubt that the reign of Vishṇugupta marked the final fading away of the Gupta empire. He is the last known Gupta emperor, whose end may be placed in A.D. 550-1. A copper plate has been discovered in Amauna in Gaya district which refers to the grant of a village by Mahārāja Nandana in the Gupta year 230, i.e. A.D. 550. The absence of the mention of the name of the ruling emperor may thus give us the demise of the Gupta dynasty (A.D. 550). Thus the Gupta dynasty ended after a rule of two hundred and thirty-one years.

The Later Guptas

When the glory and prestige of the Gupta dynasty was passing away and the emperor was reigning only in name, feudatory chiefs even in the heart of the kingdom began emerging and became virtually independent. A Maukhari dynasty had gained in power in the Gaya region. Chiefs Yajnavarman and his son Śārdūlavarman had earned fame in fighting hostile kings, probably the Hūṇas. Śārdūlavarman is referred to as the best among the chieftains (Sāmanta Chūḍāmani) and his son as king Anantavarman, who constructed a shrine and installed images of Kṛishṇa, Kātyāyanī and Śiva-Pārvatī. It is quite reasonable to presume that this Maukhari family might have been rewarded with enhanced status and authority by the Gupta emperor for the part it played in the war against the Hūṇas. The Maukhari chiefs' feudatory titles such as Sāmanta Chūḍāmani and Nṛipa, and their donations of villages, as well as construction of temples, show their semi-sovereign character. But the fortunes of this family were eclipsed by the rise of another family, the Later Guptas of Magadha at about the same time. This dynasty of the Later Guptas became the

political successors of the Imperial Gupta dynasty. The ancestor of the family was Kṛishṇagupta, who appears to have taken a creditable part in fighting the Hūṇas—'the haughty enemies'. He or his son Harshagupta might have taken the lead in defending the imperial city of Pāṭaliputra against the seige by Mihirakula during the absence of the emperor Bālāditya in the swampy region. The marriage of Rājyaśri, the daughter of Kṛishṇagupta, with Ādityavarman, son of the Maukhari chief Harivarman, added to the growing importance and influence of the Later Gupta family. Harivarman was the Maukhari chief whose seat of power was in Uttar Pradesh. There is no evidence of any relationship existing between the Maukhari family of U.P. and the Maukhari feudatory family of the Gaya region. The Later Guptas of Magadha and this Maukhari dynasty emerge as the most important of the new powers rising from the embers of the fast dying Gupta empire. Jīvitagupta I, the son of Harshagupta, appears to have led campaigns in the direction of the Himalayas in the north, and to the sea-coast of Bengal in the south-east. A new power in south-west Bengal known as the Gauḍas was also appearing on the stage of history.

Under Kumāragupta, son of Jīvitagupta I, the Later Gupta dynasty made rapid progress. He had to face the Maukharis, who also under Iśānavarman and his son had started on a career of conquests and had begun to entertain imperial ambitions. Iśānavarman, in the course of his military campaign, had defeated the Andhras and the Gauḍas. The latter were the south-eastern neighbours of Kumāragupta and had been chastized by his father, Jīvitagupta I, but they appear to have taken to aggression again. We do not know if Iśānavarman had attacked the Gauḍas with the consent or connivance of the Magadhan chief Kumāragupta. But there is no doubt that an enormous increase in the power and prestige of the neighbouring Maukhari dynasty could not be viewed with equanimity by ambitious Kumāragupta, who was claiming to be the successor of the Imperial Guptas. Kumāragupta had also extended his dominion westward to the Tṛibeṇī or Prayāga. This was most unwelcome to the Maukharis of Kanauj. Thus the two friendly and related dynasties, the Maukharis and the Later Guptas, because of conflicting ambitions, now faced each other as enemies. The assumption of the lofty imperial title of 'Mahārājādhirāja' by Iśānavarman, probably soon after the death of Vishṇugupta Chandrāditya, the last Gupta emperor, was a deliberate challenge to Kumāragupta's claim for the

de jure imperial status and authority. The result was the beginning of open rivalry between the two families. This constitutes the main thread of the history of Northern India in the latter half of the 6th century after Christ. In the first encounter, which took place in A.D. 560, Iśānavarman was defeated. Not long after this great victory in a fiercely contested battle against the powerful Maukhari adversary, Kumāragupta, in fulfilment of his debt of gratitude to the gods for the resounding victory in the evening of his life, committed religious suicide by throwing himself on to a specially prepared funeral pyre on the bank of the Tribeṇī. Such religious suicides were rare but popular in ancient times. Dhaṅga committed a similar religious suicide on the bank of the Ganges, and the Chālukya king Āhvamalla did the same on the bank of the river Tuṅgabhadrā.

Kumāragupta was succeeded by his son Dāmodaragupta who again faced a Maukhari invasion. Though he successfully repulsed the Maukharis, he died in 562 of wounds received on the battlefield.

Mahāsenagupta then came to the helm of affairs. He found himself beset with problems both on the east and on the west. The Maukhari menace from the west was still there and on the east an aggressive power had arisen in Kāmarūpa, whose sphere of influence extended in the west to North Bengal and parts of North Bihar up to the river Kauśikī (Kosi). Mahāsenagupta decided to deal with his eastern rival first, but in order to avoid a second front against the Maukharis, he contracted a matrimonial alliance with the rising Vardhana family of Thāneśwar, on the western frontier of the Maukharis. He married his sister Mahāsenagupta to Ādityavardhana. This alliance, he hoped, would check the Maukhari policy of aggression towards the east for they would fear trouble on their western frontier from the Vardhanas. Having planned on these lines, Mahāsenagupta declared war on Kāmarūpa and defeated its king Susthitavarman on the bank of the Lauhitya (Brahmaputra) river. But Mahāsenagupta was not destined to enjoy the fruits of his victory and diplomacy. The Maukhari king Sarvavarman invaded Magadha, defeated Mahāsenagupta thoroughly, and made himself lord (Parameśwara) of Magadha. Mahāsenagupta was forced to leave his home and original kingdom and to retire to Mālwa where his sovereignty was recognized. This event may be placed in 580.

The Maukharis in Magadha

With the conquest of Magadha by Sarvavarman, the son of

Iśānavarman, Maukhari power reached the pinnacle of its glory. Sarvavarman became 'the Lord of Magadha', and renewed grants of villages to temples at Deo Baranaka, a few miles from the town of Arrah. His seal bearing the imperial title has been found in Nālandā. Magadha lost its independence and formed a part of the Maukhari empire whose capital was at Kanauj. Sarvavarman appointed his brother Sūryavarman as governor of Magadha.

Sarvavarman was succeeded in 585 by his son Avantivarman who maintained the empire intact and exercised suzerainty over Magadha. His seal, with high imperial titles such as Mahārājādhirājā and Parmeśwara, has also been found at Nālandā.

Avantivarman was succeeded in Kanauj by Grahavarman, but his authority over Magadha is not proved. A Maukhari seal has been found in Nālandā mentioning Maukhari kings down to Avantivarman as Mahārājādhirājā, but the son and successor of Avantivarman, who is also referred to as Mahārājādhirājā, is not Grahavarman but another person whose name may be 'Śu (chīndravarman)' or 'Śu(vrata)-varman', as the vital letters of the name are lost. Apparently after the death of Avantivarman, there was some dynastic trouble in the Maukhari empire; Grahavarman succeeded to the imperial throne, but his brother assumed sovereign status in Magadha.

This split in the Maukhari family was very unfortunate for the dynasty. The Gauḍas, the eastern neighbours of Magadha, were not slow in taking advantage of it. The Maukhari authority in Magadha, now divorced from the main source, proved unequal to the task and was overthrown by the Gauḍas under the leadership of Śaśāṅka in 600.

MAGADHA UNDER ŚAŚĀṄKA

The Gauḍas were coming into prominence by the middle of the 6th century A.D. In spite of being checked for some time by the Later Guptas and the Maukhari king Iśānavarman they extended their influence northwards and westwards and made Karṇasuvarṇa the capital of their kingdom. Jayanāga was their king when the Maukharis were ruling over Magadha. Śaśāṅka was his general. Whether he was related to Jayanāga by blood is not known. Taking advantage of the split in the Maukhari family, Jayanāga sent an army of invasion under Śaśāṅka who conquered the territory up to the river Son in the west and made Rohatāsgarh a bastion of defence against possible counter-attack by the Maukharis. A seal matrix of Mahāsāmanta

Śaśāṅkadeva has been discovered cut in the rock at the hill fort of Rohatāsgarh, twenty-four miles south-west of Sāsārām, the subdivisional headquarters of Shahabad district. In the upper part of the seal-matrix is a damaged representation of a recumbent bull and we know that Śaśāṅka was a devotee of Śiva. The title Mahāsāmanta shows that he held a feudatory status. He was governing the region as a vassal of Jayanāga, the king of Karṇasuvarṇa and now the lord of Magadha. A coin mould of Jayanāga has been found in Nālandā. He issued archer-type gold coins resembling those of the imperial Guptas and this signified his sovereignty over Magadha. The reverse of the coins with a 'Gajalakshmī' motif, an elephant sprinkling water over the goddess Lakshmī, symbolizes the coronation of Jayanāga as emperor of Magadha.

Jayanāga was followed in 602 by Śaśāṅka, as king of large parts of Bihar and Bengal. Karṇasuvarṇa, identified with Rāṅgmāti in Murshidabad district of West Bengal, continued to be his capital. He was a very ambitious person who not only ruled over Bengal and Bihar but also brought under his sway Utkala (Orissa), Daṇḍabhukti (Midnapore and Balasore districts) and Konguḍa (Ganjam district) in the south and up to Vārānasi in the west. It is really unfortunate that while his rival Harsha had a court poet Bāṇa and a biased Chinese traveller like Yuan Chwang to throw favourable light on his life and achievements, Śaśāṅka became an object of severe criticism at their hands.

The rapid rise of Śaśāṅka (A.D. 602-605) to the position of an all-India power produced profound effects on the political situation of North India. Grahavarman, the Maukhari king, was alarmed at the growing power of Śaśāṅka at the expense of Maukhari dominion in the east. So Grahavarman was in search of a strong ally, and he found Prabhākaravardhana, the king of Thāneśvar, equally anxious and responsive. Prabhākaravardhana had come into conflict with Devagupta of Mālwa who had succeeded Mahāsenagupta there, overriding the legitimate claims of Mahāsenagupta's sons Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta. The latter two found refuge in the court of Prabhākaravardhana of Thāneśvar as companions of Rājyavardhana and Harshavardhana. Prabhākaravardhana therefore also wanted an ally and prospects of an alliance with the most distinguished and powerful Maukhari dynasty pleased him. He married his daughter Rājyaśrī to Grahavarman, the Maukhari king of Kanauj.

The Maukhari-Vardhana entente could not be ignored by Śaśāṅka

and Devagupta, who also formed an axis between themselves. Thus there was tension in the politics of North India due to the two opposing camps. The conflict could not be delayed long, and the opportunity came when Prabhākaravardhana died and his eldest son Rājyavardhana was away fighting the Hūṇas in the north. Devagupta swooped down upon the Maukhari dominion and in the scuffle Grahavarman was killed and his queen Rājyaśrī was imprisoned. He was then planning to attack Thāneśvar which was in mourning and he might have been waiting for Śaśāṅka to join his ally. But before Śaśāṅka could do so, Rājyavardhana returned to his kingdom and acted with rapidity. Leaving Thāneśvar in control of his younger brother Harshavardhana, he marched to punish the murderer of his brother-in-law and ultimately defeated the Mālwa king and captured the large booty of the Mālwa army. Probably the Mālwa king lost his life in this struggle. But before Rājyavardhana could recover Kanauj and release his imprisoned sister, Śaśāṅka appeared on the scene and occupied Kanauj. Now a struggle between Rājyavardhana and Śaśāṅka was inevitable. Ultimately Rājyavardhana was killed. Some suggest foul play on the part of Śaśāṅka. Harsha succeeded as king of Thāneśvar and, after making very elaborate military preparations, started 'to rid the earth of the vile Gauḍas'. While on his march, he received a mission from Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa seeking a perpetual alliance. Harsha gladly accepted this offer of friendship.

Śaśāṅka was quite aware of the danger. The alliance between Harsha and Kāmarūpa laid him open to attack on both sides east and west, and his home province was in danger. To divert Harsha's attention, he therefore ordered the release of Rājyaśrī and retreated from Kanauj to concentrate on the defence of Bihar, Bengal, and Orissa. There is no doubt that Śaśāṅka maintained his dominion intact to the end of his life. He appears to have persecuted Buddhism in Magadha since he is alleged to have destroyed the Bodhi tree and replaced Buddha's image by that of Śiva. He is said to have tried to efface the footprint of Buddha on a stone in Pāṭaliputra. These accusations against Śaśāṅka by the Chinese Buddhist scholar Yuan Chwang and later by Buddhist writers cannot be corroborated by any impartial evidence. But since Śaśāṅka has not been accused of destroying any of the flourishing Buddhist monasteries in his own provinces, which had been visited by the Chinese pilgrim himself, we feel that, if the anti-Buddhist activities of Śaśāṅka in Magadha

are at all true, they were obviously actuated by political rather than religious motives. The people of Magadha had been traditionally attracted to Buddhism and Śaśāṅka might have suspected them of treachery against him in favour of the pro-Buddhist Harsha and the Buddhist Rājyaśrī.

Magadha under Pūrṇavarman and Harsha

After the death of Śaśāṅka in 625, his kingdom fell to pieces. Magadha freed herself from Gauḍa bondage and Pūrṇavarman became king of Magadha. Pūrṇavarman may have been a Maukhari related either to the family of Grahavarman or that of Yajñavarman of Gaya region.

Pūrṇavarman was a Buddhist and he brought the Bodhi tree back to life and erected a stone railing ten feet high. The Bodh Gaya temple railing retains much of his work. He was a patron of learning and had donated the revenue of twenty big villages to the learned Buddhist scholar Jayasena of Yashṭivana (modern Jethian).

Pūrṇavarman was dead by about 637 and Magadha passed under the suzerainty of Harsha, who constructed a bronze-covered vihāra in Nālandā, which when completed would have been more than 100 feet high. His seal has been found in Nālandā, whose patron he was. He had written to Śīlabhadra, the head of Nālandā monastery to send Yuan Chwang to him. According to Chinese sources, Harsha assumed the title of king of Magadha in 641, and sent a goodwill mission to China. He soon after installed his friend Mādhavagupta, the son of Mahāsenagupta, as a Vaiśālī king of Magadha. This was the ancestral domain of the Later Gupta family of Mādhavagupta, who remained a friend of Harsha till his death in 646-47.

Restored Later Guptas

After the death of Harsha, Mādhavagupta must have become an independent king so as to be regarded as gifted with the marks of a Chakravarti monarch. But a new factor intervened in the politics of Bihar. Tibet had become a great power by the end of the 6th century A.D. under Srong-Tsan who according to Tibetan sources, conquered Central India, by which the Chinese usually mean Bihar. The era in Assam and Bengal, which is reckoned from A.D. 593-594, has been regarded by some scholars as named after the Tibetan conqueror Srong-Tsan. But there is no corroborative Indian evidence in favour of the Tibetan conquest of India, particularly Bihar, Bengal and

Assam. Srong-Tsan's son Srong-Tsan-Gampo was the greatest king of Tibet and he had certainly reduced Nepal to a state of vassalage and married a Nepalese princess. Under her influence he became a Buddhist and introduced Buddhism into Tibet. He invited Indian Pandits and also introduced Indian alphabets in Tibet; here he must have largely drawn upon Bihar, the traditional centre of Buddhist learning.

But his cultural interest in India was soon converted into military adventure. The opportunity came to him in a strange way. The Chinese emperor despatched a goodwill mission to Magadha, presumably to Harsha, who was then living, but before the mission could reach India, Harsha died. One of his ministers named Arjuna or Aruṇāśva (Chinese O-la-na-shun), probably in charge of Tirubhukti (Chinese Ti-na-fu-ti), claimed the imperial throne and attacked the Chinese mission which was proceeding to Magadha. Many of the members of the mission were killed, their property was looted and the leader of the mission, Wang-Hiuen-Tse, with a few other survivors fled to Nepal. This attack on the mission may be placed in A.D. 647. This, if true, was the first and the last unfortunate incident in the long history of friendly relations between India and China. It is not easy to explain the brain-wave on the part of the usurper Aruṇāśva. The king of Tibet agreed to vindicate the honour of the Chinese emperor and his mission. He helped the leader of the mission with 1,200 warriors. Nepal, the vassal of Tibet, also contributed 7,000 horsemen. This large and efficient army invaded North Bihar. Bhāskaravarman, the king of Eastern India, with a view to avoiding any attack on his own territory and in order to be left free to consolidate his new gains in Bengal after the death of Harsha, readily helped the allied army. The result was that Aruṇāśva was totally defeated, his capital city somewhere in Tirubhukti was stormed, as were other walled towns, and he was himself taken prisoner to China. The Chinese and Tibetan annals refer to the conquest of Central India (Bihar) but there is no evidence of a Tibetan conquest of any territory south of the Ganges. At best, it may be said that Tibet successfully invaded North Bihar and claimed that Bihar was its vassal, like Nepal, paying tribute to it. We have no evidence that North Bihar formed a part of the kingdom of Mādhavagupta or his son Ādityasena. The fact that Ādityasena did not assume imperial titles till about the closing years of his reign may be because of his respect for the powerful Tibetan empire. Whether

Mādhavagupta or his son Ādityasena hastened formally to submit to Tibetan overlordship is not known. Anyhow, Magadha did not give Tibet or China any cause for action.

Ādityasena, son of Mādhavagupta, succeeded (650) and ruled over the whole of Bihar, parts of Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, proving to be the first ruler after the death of Harsha to have brought a large part of Northern India under his control with Magadha as his centre. He married his daughter to the Maukhari prince Bhogavarman, son of Rājaputra Śurasena and the sister's son of Aṁsuvarman, king of Nepal. Probably Ādityasena might, through this alliance with the Maukharis, have sought to make friends with Nepal.

DEVAGUPTA

Ādityasena was succeeded by his son Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameśwara Devagupta. He maintained the empire intact. I-Tsing (7th century A.D.) refers to king Devavarman of Eastern India, who is to be identified with Devagupta. The reference to Eastern India by I-Tsing shows that territories west of Bihar formed part of his empire. He appears to have been the greatest king of Northern India at that time. The Chālukya inscriptions refer to him as the paramount sovereign of Northern India (Sakala uttarapathanātha) and state that he was defeated by the Chālukya king Vijayāditya, son of Vinayāditya in A.D. 694-5.

Devagupta was succeeded by his son Śrī Vishṇugupta. His inscription has been found in Mangraon in the Shahabad district. We do not know anything else about him.

JĪVITAGUPTA II

Devagupta was succeeded by his son Śrī Jīvitagupta II. His territories extended from eastern U.P. to West Bengal. But in the later years of his reign he was faced with a serious calamity. Yaśovarman, king of Kanauj, started on his conquering expedition (digvijaya) in about 725. Jīvitagupta II prepared to meet his adversary with a large army consisting of numerous ships, elephants, horses and foot-soldiers at the fortified camp on the bank of the Gomati. But all was in vain. Yaśovarman defeated him and his allies. Jīvitagupta was pursued in the Vindhya forests in the Mirjapur district. The vassals of Jīvitagupta II however, regrouped themselves and gave battle to Yaśovarman. Much blood was shed and many of the allies of the king of Magadha lost their lives. Jīvitagupta II was still in flight but was

caught and slain. His harem was taken to Kanauj and the ladies were treated as slaves of Yaśovarman to ply 'chāmar' over him.

With the death of Jīvitagupta II, the Later Gupta dynasty of Magadha and its extensive empire came to an inglorious end soon after 725. The conqueror Yaśovarman overran the Magadhan territory. The Yaśovarmapura-vihāra referred to in the Ghosrawan inscription of Devapāla was named by the conqueror after himself, to commemorate either his victory or the site of the battle. The present name of the village of Ghosrawan in the district of Patna is derived by many scholars from Yaśovarman's vihāra or Ārāma. The most important result of the victorious campaign of Yaśovarman was that the centre of gravity again shifted from Magadha to Kanauj. But worse than that, it heralded an era of anarchy and confusion in the Gangetic Valley and Magadha suffered much. Yaśovarman could not organize his far-flung conquests on a stable basis as he was himself suddenly overthrown by Lalitāditya Mukhapīḍa of Kashmir. After defeating Yaśovarman, Lalitāditya invaded eastern India down to the sea, and must have ravaged Magadha on his way to Gauḍa. Bihar and Bengal were thus in an unenviable position due to political instability, invasions from outside, and mutually warring dynasties.

It is therefore obvious that the extinction of the Later Gupta dynasty marks the end of an epoch. The era of Pax-Magadhica established by the imperial Guptas and restored by Ādityasena ended, and the rich Central and Lower Gangetic Valley (Bihar and Bengal) now fell a prey to internal disorder and external aggression, relapsing into a state of 'matsyanyāya' (might is right) from which it was rescued only in 750 by Gopāla, the founder of the Pāla dynasty.

Administration—A.D. 320—750

The Gupta empire was fairly extensive in area, but it consisted both of directly administered and feudatory territories. While large parts of North India, from the Punjab to Bengal and from the Nepal Tarai to the river Narmadā, formed integral parts of the empire, there were different grades of feudatories who ruled their respective dominions practically free from administrative intervention by the Gupta emperor. We know that the frontier kings already mentioned were free to govern their domain as before, but had to recognize the paramountcy of Samudragupta, pay taxes and attend the imperial court. The Śaka-Kushāna kings of the north-west and west were allowed to govern their

kingdoms as before on the authority of a royal charter sealed with the imperial Garuḍa. They were required to attend personally on the emperor on certain special occasions such as sacrifices, and to offer maidens to the emperor. Then there were certain feudatories such as the Varmans of Mandaśree of the Parivrājaka Mahārājās ruling forest tracts of eastern and central India. They were allowed to issue their own coins, charters, and grant lands without seeking the emperor's permission but they acknowledged Gupta suzerainty and were satisfied with feudatory titles. Mahārājā Nandana appears to have become such a feudatory in Gaya district in Magadha in A.D. 550 when the imperial authority had practically disappeared. There is a record of his issuing a charter granting a village to a Brāhmaṇa. Lastly there were the states in eastern Deccan which were overrun by Samudragupta, but the kings were restored to their actual sovereign status, though they entered into subordinate alliance with the Gupta emperor. Thus the Gupta empire was a feudal-cum-federal type.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The basic pattern continued to be the same as during the Mauryan period. The King-Emperor was the head of the State. During this period, we find a remarkable growth in the power and prestige of the king. While the greatest Indian monarch, Aśoka, was satisfied with the titles 'Devānāmpriya, Piyadasi' and 'Rājā', the Gupta emperor assumed such high-sounding titles as 'Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Paramadaivata'. The titles assumed these proportions gradually. While the father and the grandfather of Chandragupta I were known as mere 'Mahārājā', Chandragupta was the first 'Mahārājādhirāja' of the family. The assumption of this title of 'Great King of Kings' appears to have been influenced by the Śaka-Kushāna and Sassanian titles of kings such as 'Rājātirāja Devaputra' and 'Shahishanahanushahi'. Then by the time of Kumāragupta I, we find further significant additions, as mentioned above. The epithet 'Paramadaivata' later developed into 'Parameśvara'. The Later Gupta kings of Magadha, Devagupta, Vishnugupta and Jīvitagupta II are not only 'Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja' like Ādityasena but are also 'Parameśvara'. The Gupta emperor Bālāditya and the Maukhari emperors Sarvavarman and Avantivarman are referred to as 'Parameśvara' in the Deo-Baranaka inscription. The use of the epithets 'Parameśvara' or 'Paramadaivata' shows the high assumed status of the king who was addressed as a divinity. This was presumably in imitation of the

Chinese emperor who claimed himself to be the 'Son of Heaven'. Even this appears to be too modest in comparison with claims by the Gupta emperors and their successors. Another innovation that was introduced was the mention of the personal religion of the king together with the title. This appears to have begun with Chandragupta II, 'Paramabhāgavata'. It was followed by many Gupta emperors such as Narasiṁhagupta, Kumāragupta III and Vishṇugupta. Ādityasena is referred to as 'Paramabhāgavata' in the inscription and his son as 'Parama māheśvara'. Actually however these kings patronized all faiths. Harshavardhana, though a 'Parama māheśvara' showed marked leanings towards Buddhism and so did Paramabhāgavata Narasiṁhagupta Bālāditya.

Kingship was hereditary but it does not appear that there was any strict rule that the eldest son must succeed his father. The reigning king selected his successor from amongst his sons on the basis of ability and announced his decision in open court. Samudragupta was chosen by his father Chandragupta I on grounds of ability, disregarding the claims of others. The decision was announced in the Sabhā (court) to the members of the royal Court. Chandragupta II and Kumāragupta I were similarly chosen by their respective fathers (tatpargrihitena). Often the king appointed the ablest of his sons as Yuvarāja (heir-apparent) with a view to giving him training and also to receiving his assistance in admininstration. Seals of 'Yuvarāja Bhaṭṭārakapādya Kumārāmātya' prove the existence of high officers like Kumāramātya attached to the office of the Yuvarāja. In the official Gupta inscription the Chief Queen, Mahādevī and the mother of the legitimate successor are mentioned. This suggests recognition of the high position of the Chief Queen and Queen Mother. A seal of Dhruvasvāmīni, mother of Mahārājā Govindagupta and queen of Chandragupta II has been discovered at Vaiśālī. We cannot say whether this signifies some official status of the queen in the government of Vaiśālī. We have no positive evidence of queens and princesses taking any part in administration.

The Maṅtri-parishad does not appear to have played as important a part in the government of the empire as it did in the Mauryan period. With the increase in the power and 'halo' of the king, and the rapid decline of republican spirit, it is natural that the King-Emperor, who was gradually acquiring divinity, would not like to be tied to the apron-strings of a Maṅtri-parishad. But there was a court, an Imperial Court attended by royal princes, feudatories, noble dignitaries and

high officers, which assembled to listen to the king's major decisions. It served the purpose more of an ornament to the king's glory than as a participant in the government. Under such circumstances, when royalty stole all the splendour, there was not much scope for the theory and practice of the science and art of government. *Kāmaṅdaka Nītisāra*, a work assigned to the Gupta period, is practically a diminutive edition of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, without any originality or fresh thinking.

But the king did appoint ministers to assist him in carrying out the heavy task of administering the vast empire. Vīrasena Saba was one such minister of Chandragupta II, who accompanied him to East Mālwa from Pāṭaliputra. Śikharaswāmy was the 'Maṅtri' of Chandragupta II and the former's son Pṛithvisena was the 'Maṅtri' and 'Balādhikṛita' of Kumāragupta I. The conduct of foreign policy was in charge of the Saṅdhivigrahika who is later known as the Mahasaṅdhivigrahika (Saṅdhivigrahika then being reduced to a subordinate position), the minister in charge of peace and war. The Pustapāla or Akshapatadhikṛita was the officer responsible for maintenance of government records. The Mahābhāṅdāgārika was the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Treasurer. Other revenue officers were the Śaulkika, who collected tolls and customs dues. Taxes collected from land were known as Uparikara and Udṛiṅa. The Police and Law-and-Order Department was under the Mahādandapāśika or Dandapāśika. Seals of office of many of these officers have been discovered in Vaiśālī. Chauroddhāraṇikas (catchers of thieves) were police officers who apprehended criminals. Their seals have been found in Nālandā. Dandikas appear to have been police magistrates who also exercised some judicial functions and awarded punishment to criminals accused of petty crimes. Chāṭas and Bhāṭas were probably ordinary members of the police force like the constables and the jamādārs of today.

The military department was well organized. The administration was under the Mahābalādhikṛita or Balādhikṛita, whose seals have been found in Vaiśālī. He was a very high and responsible officer. Pṛithvisena, the Maṅtri of Kumāragupta I, was later appointed to this office. Śālapaksha was the Balādhikṛita of Ādityasena. This officer may be compared to the Defence Minister of today. But the overall command of the army in the field was under the Mahāsenāpati. Subordinate to him were the Dandanāyakas and the heads of different wings of the army, such as the Aśvapati (head of cavalry),

Pilupatī (head of the elephant division) and Pattipati (head of infantry). There was a department in charge of military stores and provisions which was called Raṇabhāndāgārādhīkaraṇa and the seal of that office has been found at Vaiśālī. The army was mainly composed of cavalry, elephantry and navy. It appears that under the influence of the Scythians the Guptas introduced horse-archers. Gupta kings themselves are depicted as hunting from horseback with bows and arrows. But this innovation did not prove popular and horse-archery is not met with again in India before the Muslim conquest.

The administration of justice was under the department of 'Dharma' and the seal of this office (Dharmādhikaraṇasya) has been found in Nālandā. From the Nārada and Bṛihaspati Smṛities, which were composed during this period, we learn that judicial procedure was well developed and there were gradations of courts exercising their authority under royal seal. Judges were assisted by Sabhāsads or Sabhyas and witnesses played an important part in the trial. Fa-Hien, who visited Bihar during the early 5th century A.D. says that punishments were mild and the people were generally law-abiding. From Vaiśālī, we come to know of officers designated Vinaya-Sthiti-Sthāpaka, that is, establishers of discipline and order. They may be compared to the Dharma-mahāmātrās of Aśoka. They go to prove that in the Gupta period also the government was actively concerned with the moral uplift of its subjects.

Before we close our study of the Central Government of the day, we should note that in the Gupta period the highest official cadre was that of Kumārāmātyas. They were recruited while quite young and filled the highest offices in the State, central and provincial. They rose to the rank even of ministers and military officers. Harisena, the minister of peace and war, and Dandanāyaka were Kumārāmātyas. Mantri Śikharāswāmy and Pṛithvisena II were Kumārāmātyas. The office of Kumārāmātya was attached to the Yuvarāja, the King-Emperor, and the provincial governor, and their seals have been found at Vaiśālī and Nālandā. They were also appointed as district officers (Vishayapatīs) by the provincial governor. The seals of the office of the Kumārāmātya, of the office of the Kumārāmātya in service to the Yuvarāja, and that of the Kumārāmātya in service to the King-Emperor (Paramabhaṭṭāraka) have been found at Vaiśālī. They could be attached also to the provincial head-quarters, and the seal of the office of Kumārāmātya of the provinces

of Magadha (Magadhabhuktas) and Śrīnagara, i.e. Pāṭaliputra (Śrī-Nagarabhuktas) have been found at Nālandā. The Kumārāmātyas appear to have constituted an imperial grade of service not unlike the old Indian Civil Service. Members of this service were employed as governors, district officers, judicial officers, heads of different departments, secretaries and even as executive councillors or ministers.

PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The empire was divided into 'bhuktis' or 'deśas' and 'vishayas' or 'mandalas'. In Bihar, there were Tirabhukti (now Tirhut) comprising territories north of the Gangā, Śrīnagarbhukti (Patna, Shahabad and south Monghyr) and Magadhabhukti (Rājgṛiha, Gaya). The governors of bhuktis were called 'uparika' or 'uparikamahārājas' and were appointed by the king. The seal of office of the 'uparika' (governor) of Tirabhukti has been discovered in Vaiśālī, while the seals of office of Śrīnagarabhukti and Magadhabhukti have been found at Nālandā. The seat of Tirabhukti was Vaiśālī and of Nagarabhukti at Pāṭaliputra. From an inscription of the early 8th century A.D., we know that the jurisdiction of Śrīnagarabhukti spread as far as thirty miles west of Arrah town as far as the village Vāruṇika, while in the south-east it included modern Lakhisarai, that is, the Jamui tract.

The bhuktis were divided into 'vishayas' or districts and were placed under a vishayapati who was appointed by the 'uparika' (governor) or the bhukti. The vishayapati was often of Kumārāmātya cadre, and the headquarters of the vishaya's administration was the town of the name of vishaya. We know of Kṛimila Vishaya of the Nagarabhukti and also of Rājgṛiha and Gaya Vishayas. Their seals have been discovered in Nālandā. The seal of the city of Gaya as the headquarter of Gaya Vishaya (Gayādhisthān) has been found at Nālandā. The territory between the Gangā and the Son (Shahabad district) was another vishaya whose seal as 'Śonantarāla Vishayādhikaraṇasya' has been found at Nālandā. It appears that the vishayapati had his official headquarters in towns. The vishayapati appears to have been assisted by the city banker (Nagaraśrestha), president of the traders' guild (Sārthavāha), chief merchant (Kulika), and chief secretary (Prathama Kāyastha), particularly in matters of the sale of crown waste-lands or uncultivated lands. The Vishaya was subdivided into 'naya' and we know of the seal of the naya Pilipinachchha of the Rājgṛiha Vishaya,

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION

The lowest unit was a group of villages constituted into a 'janapada'. It had a corporate personality and used its own seal. Many seals of 'janapadas' or their constituent villages have been found in Nālandā, e.g. Aṅgamigrāma Vihārastha-Janapadasya. These village councils or 'janapadas' may be compared to modern Union Boards, comprising a group of villages and administering matters of common concern. But there were some villages also, which were not a part of 'janapada', and yet had a corporate personality and used their own seals (Sūchandadakiya-grāma mudreyam). Besides those villages which were organized into corporate and semi-autonomous bodies, there were markets administered by a panchāyat or council of elders, and they had their own seals (Vallāḍhiyahaṭṭa Mahājanasya). Thus villages generally enjoyed a degree of self-government under their own panchāyats and were recognized as corporate personalities. The government official 'Bhojaka' may have been a link between the government and the panchāyats, who later were known as 'Mahattaras' and used their own seals. But there were certain villages which were granted by the king to the Brāhmaṇas. These were called 'agrahara' villages and were free from the usual taxes. An officer called an 'Agrahārika' was appointed to look after such gift-villages. His duty was to see that the privileges granted by the king were not violated.

The successful and benevolent character of the Gupta administration is attested to by Fa-Hien, who praises it in eloquent terms. The government officers did not unnecessarily interfere with the life of the citizens, who were allowed freedom of movement and were not forced to get themselves or their households numbered. During his entire journey in Madhyadeśa, Fa-Hien was not subjected to any discomfiture. But the law-and-order situation appears to have deteriorated later, as Yuan Chwang had very unpleasant experiences to narrate about his travels in India. The benevolent character of the Imperial Gupta administration is highlighted by references to the aksence of poverty, misery and excessive torture in the kingdom of Skandagupta in the Junāgarh inscription.

IX

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND CULTURE

A.D. 319—750

A. Religion

THE imperial Gupta period was predominantly an age of the further development of Brāhmaṇical culture. In earlier days during the Suṅga period, an attempt had been made to organize the forces of Brāhmaṇism and revive some of the ancient Vedic sacrifices such as the Aśvamedha Yajña. This work was enthusiastically carried on by the Bhāraśiva and Vākāṭaka kings. Thus the way was prepared for the Guptas, in whose time, the Vedic pantheon and sacrificial form of worship gradually receded into the background, giving place to new ways of worship. However, though the Vedic gods and rituals lost their original popularity, the Sruti continued to be regarded as the source of religion and Vedic texts continued to be studied. The Purāṇas never defy the authority of the Vedas, but look upon them as the eternal source of religion. The Vedic sacrifices, though not as frequent as before, never ceased to form part of the orthodox Brāhmaṇical religion. As a matter of fact, during the Gupta period, kings of various dynasties boasted of having performed various Vedic sacrifices. Aśvamedha in particular seemed to be most popular with kings. The Bilsad inscription of Kumāragupta I and the Bhitāri record of Skandagupta state that Samudragupta performed Aśvamedha. The fact is corroborated by Aśvamedha gold coins issued by Samudragupta. Similar coins, with the inscription Aśvamedha-Mahendra (like the Aśvamedha-Parākramah of Samudragupta) on the reverse, have been ascribed to Kumāragupta I, showing thereby that he, the successor of Samudragupta, must have also performed a horse-sacrifice. According to Dr Jayaswal,

the predecessors of the Guptas in Northern India, the Nāga rulers performed ten horse-sacrifices at Vārānasi. One ghāt in Vārānasi even today bears the name Daśāśvamedha Ghāt. Perhaps the same vogue continued down to the seventh century A.D. when the king of Magadha named Ādityasena, a reputed monarch of the Later Gupta dynasty, performed three horse-sacrifices. It may be stated in this connexion that South Indian kings of this period also had a fondness for Vedic sacrifices. An inscription of the Chālukya family, dated 543, states that king Pulakeśin I, alone, performed many Aśvamedhas, Agnistoma, Agnichayana, Vājapeya, Paundarika and other sacrifices.

Some minor Vedic rituals and practices continued to form an integral part of the new Brāhmaṇical religion. The Gupta records (Dāmodarpur copper plate) of 443 and 448 clearly refer to gifts for the Vedic practices of Agnihotra and Panch Mahāyajña. These references to several types of Vedic sacrifices, big and small go to show that Vedic ideals were given due importance under the Guptas. In actual practice, however, Vedic rituals were being gradually restricted to a few. But at the same time the Purāṇas recite stories of Vedic gods like Indra and others as well as of Vishṇu and Śiva.

The firm foundation of the new form of Brāhmaṇical religion was laid in the period under review, and the Purāṇas were its basis. This new form combined religious and spiritual ideas, old and new. Some fresh elements also were introduced. The Purāṇas became the principal popular religious literature of the people. Vedic Saṁhitās remained in the background as the authority and inspiration. The Purāṇas contain elaborate additions to the older ideas and materials. Besides popular religious ideas, we have in the Purāṇas a description of religious places, associated with different gods, and also the correct mode of worship. The Purāṇas prescribe many religious practices such as vratas (vows), pilgrimages, sacred baths and gifts to Brāhmaṇas. The new religious movement swings from the abstract to the concrete, and the ceremonial worship of Brāhmaṇical deities, Sūrya, Vishṇu, Śiva and other minor gods, replaces sacrificial offerings to Vedic gods. Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva form the official trinity though Brahmā never actually occupied a prominent place in the religious life of the people. The sectarian spirit of the Vaishṇavas and Śaivas is reflected in contemporary literature and in the official records of the Guptas. Orthodox religion proceeded to evolve

a new pantheon of five gods called the Panchāyatan consisting of Vishṇu, Śiva, Sūrya, Durgā and Gaṇeśa. Their glories were sung in the different Purāṇas and their images worshipped in temples like the Mundeśvarī temple (Babhua, Bihar) in this period of temple-building.

INCARNATION

Image worship in a temple brought with it a number of rituals and ceremonies in which God was treated as the Highest Personality. The idea of Avatār, or the descent of God on earth to protect devotees, destroy irreligion and establish religion, punish the wicked and reward the meritorious, was not totally different from what went on before. This process was not peculiar or local to Bihar only. It was a gradual and mighty transformation. It was the result of the coming together of the spiritual ideal of the One God, Transcendent and Immanent, and the popular old idea of a variety of gods and forms of worship. Thus was evolved not a creed nor a faith, but a system of comprehensive culture in which the animist, the image worshipper, and the contemplative Yogi had a place, according to the degree of spirituality each had reached. The highest ideal to be attained was communion with the Supreme Spirit but the path to it depended upon the spiritual stage reached by the devotee concerned. He would be free to take to any of the spiritual disciplines of Karma, Jnāna, or Bhakti, and free to choose his Iṣṭa-Devatā or chosen deity, for practising communion.

Image-worship coupled with the idea of Avatār, led to a very wide variety of iconography in the evolution of which poetic imagination, fancy and artistic talent were given full play.

The idea of incarnations seems first to have been initiated by the Vaishṇavite Bhāgavata cult which held that Vishṇu had ten Avatārs, the Varāha or Boar incarnation being one of the most popular. The sinking earth was said to have been saved by this incarnation. The cave at Udayagiri in Orissa excavated during the reign of Chandragupta II has a huge image of the Boar incarnation. Spooner found an important seal with a fine figure of the Boar at Vaiśālī. A Dāmodarpur inscription of the time of Buddhagupta refers to 'Śwetavarāhaswāmī', representation of the Boar incarnation. The epigraphs of Skandagupta refer to Vāmana (dwarf incarnation of Vishṇu). That the Guptas were devout followers of the Bhāgavata religion is evident from the use of the title 'Paramabhāgavata' on

their coins. An important feature of this religion was the popular worship of incarnations of Vishṇu. There is evidence of the prevalence of such worship in Bihar. It seems that Kṛishṇa was considered as an incarnation of Vishṇu and was worshipped as Mādhava. This can be inferred from the record of a Magadha ruler. We have a reference in the Maukhari record to the installation of the image of Kṛishṇa in a cave on Barabar Hill (Gaya district, Bihar) in the fifth century A.D.

ŚRĪ OR LAKSHMĪ

Another feature of Vaishṇavism during the Gupta period is the conception of Lakshmī or Śrī as the wife of Vishṇu. Lakshmī is described in Gupta inscriptions as the wife of Vishṇu (Vāsudeva) and is represented on the reverse side of Gupta gold coins issued by the Vaishṇava rulers from Chandragupta II down to the later Magadha rulers of Bihar. The Aphsad record of Ādityasena found in the Gaya district refers to Dāmodara whose feet are graced by the attention of Śrī or Lakshmī.

ŚIVA WORSHIP

During the Gupta period Śaivism enjoyed a fairly large following and the worship of the deity, Śiva, is mentioned in several inscriptions of the Gupta dynasty. There is some evidence that Śaivism flourished in north Bihar. An image of Chaumukhi (four-faced) Mahādeva, discovered at Vaiśālī, can be assigned to the Gupta period. It has been suggested that this image is similar to the famous Paśupatināth Mahādev in Nepal.

SŪRYA WORSHIP

The worship of Sūrya was popular in Western and Central India, even extending to Bihar. Reference may be made to the Śāhāpur image inscription of Ādityasena (in the district of Patna) and the Deo Baranaka record of Jīvitagupta II (in the district of Shahabad). They both mention solar worship in Bihar. It may be that with the migration of Śakadvīpi Brāhmaṇas to Magadha, the solar cult was transferred from west Multan and Rajputana to Eastern India. This statement is supported by later archæological evidence which testifies to the prevalence of solar-worship in Bihar and Bengal during the early medieval period.

ŚAKTI WORSHIP

The Śakti cult was only next in importance to Vaishṇavism and Śaivism. This Śakti (Goddess of Energy) is known by several names in literature. She was commonly called Durgā and her effigy is found on the gold coins of Chandragupta I. Most probably she (Durgā) was the tutelary deity of the Lichchhavis (North Bihar).

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES OF THE PEOPLE

The grant of land and gifts of cows to Brāhmaṇas were highly eulogized as before, and kings vied with one another in giving endowments and food to Brāhmaṇas. Gupta inscriptions are full of references of such donations. A unique kind of donation is mentioned in the record of Ādityasena, one of the later Gupta rulers of Magadha. This inscription says that the king gave money to meet the expenses for the marriage of Brāhmaṇa girls. This kind of gift was regarded as very meritorious by the Purāṇas.

BUDDHISM

During the period under review the Mahāyāna form of Buddhism commanded a considerable following. The Mahāyānists advocated the worship of gods and goddesses, accepted the conception of countless Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and adopted the use of the mantra. A large number of Buddhist temples were built and images carved during this period. Sārnāth was a famous centre for the carving of Buddha images (pl. XI. Fig. 26). The inscriptions of Kumāragupta II and Buddhagupta, inform us that images of the Buddha were set up at Sārnāth. Many more Buddha icons were set up at Mathurā, Deoriyā Kāsiya, Bodh Gaya and Sārnāth. Two things are worth mentioning in this connexion: first that the language of these Buddhist records is Sanskrit, and second that the images of Buddha were set up and worshipped almost exactly as the Hindu gods.

Besides the installation of images, several grants were made to vihāras during this period. Samudragupta allowed a vihāra to be built for Ceylonese pilgrims at Bodh Gaya. We are told by Yuan Chwang that Later Gupta kings like Kumāragupta II, Buddhagupta and Bhānugupta were probably followers of Buddhism but there is hardly any evidence to justify this assumption. The truth is that these sovereigns were partial and sympathetic towards Buddhism. The account of Yuan Chwang is an important source of knowledge about Buddhism during the 7th century. He

refers to vihāras and saṅghas throughout India, at a time when Mahāyāna too was declining and Buddhism was divided into as many as 18 different schools. The Sthavira school was followed in Magadha, while according to I-Tsing, the Sarvāstivādins were favoured in Magadha, Monghyr and Madhyadeśa. In spite of the fact that Buddhism was on the wane at Bodh Gaya, Nālandā and Sārnāth had a large number of monasteries, for the maintenance of which, ruling chiefs made donations. From the records of the Vardhanas we learn that Harsha was a follower of the Śaiva faith in early life, but later on was inclined towards Buddhism. The monasteries assumed the role of academic centres. Nālandā, where thousands of students lived and studied, flourished. Yuan Chwang became the disciple of Śīlabhadra, the abbot of Nālandā in Bihar. Besides Nālandā, Vaiśālī and Champā were other centres of Buddhism though they are said to have been declining during the 7th century.

JAINISM

Although Bihar was the original home of Jainism, by the time of the Guptas it had become mainly confined to Southern and Western India. The age of the Imperial Guptas was a period of Hindu revival which gave a blow both to Jainism and Buddhism resulting in their decline in Bihar.

The paucity of Jaina epigraphs and the lack of literary evidence indicate that Jainism was not very prosperous. In a Mathurā inscription dated A.D. 433, a gift of a Jaina image by a Jaina lady has been recorded but there are no instances of such gifts in Bihar. It seems that in this region the Jaina monks were not held in high esteem.

The philosophy of Jainism and Buddhism have already been dealt with in Chapter V.

B. SOCIETY

The division of society into four varṇas was the keystone of the whole system of social organization in that period. Strong Brāhmaṇical reaction against the ascendancy of other faiths, Buddhism and Jainism, had set in in the Gupta age. The four varṇas were the Brāhmaṇa, the Kshatriya, the Vaiśya and the Śūdra, with the Brāhmaṇa as the leader of society.

On the authority of Chinese travellers we know something of these four classes. Yuan Chwang states that members of the four hereditary classes married within their own class. Varāhamihira in his

Bṛihat Saṁhitā assigns different quarters of the city to these classes. According to Yuan Chwang, Brāhmaṇas were honoured and respected as they lived a comparatively pure life. The Smṛitis have discussed at great length the position of Brāhmaṇas in society. Nārada states that Shrotriyas should be exempted from the royal tax. Earlier Dharmaśāstra writers exclude Brāhmaṇas from capital punishment. The Brāhmaṇas in the Gupta age were classified on the basis of Vedic Śākhās. They formed later on the basis of subdivisions among Brāhmaṇas.

The Kshatriyas had attained much prominence in society in the pre-Gupta age. They continued generally to rule the country throughout ancient history. The ruling class was properly and specially educated to carry on the work of administration. The Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta points out that the princes were educated in different branches of learning like literature, the art of warfare and even music. The poet Bāṇa has stated the same thing in the case of Harshavardhana. The Thāneśvar prince was an expert in warfare and in the use of weapons.

There is no epigraphic evidence regarding the third varṇa called Vaiśyas. They were mostly engaged in agriculture and trade. The functions of this caste-group were not at all looked down upon. On the authority of Fa-Hien, we know that Vaiśyas had established 'satras', almshouses and hospitals for the sick and orphans. The Vaiśya caste formed guilds or śreṇīs for trade and industry. From the Mandasore record of Kumāragupta I, we learn that weavers' guilds were functioning at Daśapurā. In Uttar Pradesh, the oilmen's guild enjoyed the reputation of donor of oil for the lamps in the Sun temple. Besides epigraphs, the seals from Vaiśālī (North Bihar) speak of the organization of artisans and the offices of the Śresthīs and the Sārthavāhas. Thus we see that in North Bihar, the Vaiśyas worked on co-operative lines like modern chambers of commerce. In actual life, the Vaiśyas were welcomed in society and the Śresthīs helped in the local administration of the vishaya (district).

The Śūdras were the last rung in the ladder of the Varṇāśrama system. The Śūdras had their proper place in society and were not considered untouchables as in later times. They followed different professions. According to the Smṛitis, Śūdras were not allowed to recite Vedas but they could perform Yajña without mantras. On this basis, Ghurye has proposed to divide the Śūdras into 'Sat Śūdras' and 'Asat Śūdras'. The latter gradually came to be regarded as

untouchables and were not allowed to offer food to other castes.

By and by many mixed castes came into existence on account of 'anuloma' and 'pratiloma' i.e. mixed marriages. We know something about the condition of the Chāndālas who occupied the lowest rank in the order of mixed castes. These Chāndālas had to perform the meanest tasks of sanitation and had to live outside the village. The evidence of Fa-Hien shows that these rules were strictly followed in the Gupta period. He states that Chāndālas were required to live outside the boundaries of towns and market places. While walking they had to strike the ground with a stick as a warning to others to avoid their touch. This was also observed by I-Tsing in the seventh century A.D. Yuan Chwang, too, refers to the dwelling places of butchers, executioners and scavengers (corresponding to Chāndālas) outside the city.

Besides references to the four varṇas and Chāndālas, we find Pulindas, Śabaras and Kirātas who were aboriginal tribes living in forests. They lived in the wild tract extending from Madhya Pradesh and the Chotanagpur division of Bihar State to the borders of Bengal and Utkala. In the Allahabad pillar inscription this region is mentioned as Mahākāntāra governed by Vyāghrarājā. The Gupta emperor Samudragupta had to defeat this king before he could enter South India.

MARRIAGE

Rules relating to marriage formulated in older Smṛitis were not materially altered during this period. People adhered to those laws. From the account of Yuan Chwang we learn that marriage within the same caste was preferred. Vātsyāyana in his *Kāmasutra* declares that blessings follow a man uniting himself with a virgin of the same varṇa. The practice of a higher caste man marrying a lower caste girl and a lower caste man making love to girls belonging to a higher caste, i.e. anuloma and pratiloma marriages, were not however uncommon. Such marriages were not strictly forbidden by law. Literary evidence supported by historical examples goes to show that inter-caste marriages were then current in society. It is stated that the father of Bāṇa married a Śūdra woman and Rājyaśrī was married to the Kshatriya prince Grahavarman. Such instances are numerous, but it does not mean that such inter-caste marriages were very popular or were encouraged. Gupta literature contains references also to 'Gandharva', i.e. love marriages.

POSITION OF WOMEN

Long before the period under review, Brāhmaṇical law-givers had denied to women Vedic study and even the utterance of Vedic mantras. Historical and literary sources of the period supply us with information that girls of high families had sufficient opportunities for acquiring proficiency in general learning. We have instances of women possessing sharp memories and skill in fine arts. Prabhāvati Gupta, the daughter of Chandragupta II, Dhruvaswāmīni, the wife of the Gupta king and Rājyaśrī were very capable and intelligent ladies and were associated with affairs of state. Such are also the cases of the mother and wife of the later Gupta king Ādityasena, who devoted their time to philanthrophic works. We learn from the *Kāmasūtra*, that women were educated in several branches of learning, particularly in music and painting. It also seems that women attended festivities and religious sacrifices as described by Kātyāyaṇa and Vedavyāsa. The gold coins of Samudragupta and Kumāragupta I of the Aśvamedha type, exhibit the effigy of the royal Mahishī, proving that the queen participated in sacrificial rites. There was no purdah system in those days, for no image or painting of the Gupta age hints at it. On the contrary, women took part in all religious activities with their husbands. Bāṇa describes a philosophic discussion between Rājyaśrī and Diwākara Mitra in the 7th century.

WIDOWS AND SATĪ

The Smṛiti laws of the Gupta period require a widow to live a life of celibacy but Śaṅkha Aṅgiras and the Hārīta Smṛitis, which are not very authoritative, strongly urge widows to sacrifice themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands. There is no instance of widow-remarriage in the Gupta period except the doubtful case of Dhruvadevī with the Gupta emperor, Chandragupta II. From Śaṅkar's commentary of *Harshacharita*, we learn that Dhruvadevī was the wife of Rāmagupta, the king's elder brother. Literary evidence shows that satī was extolled by some writers, and on the whole was not forbidden.

The Eran stone pillar inscription dated 510 speaks of satī by the widow of Goparāja. Bāṇa describes the occasion of 'self-immolation' by Rājyaśrī (the widow of the Maukhari king Grahavarmana) when she was rescued by Harshavardhana. The case of the mother of Harsha may also be cited as an instance of satī, though she burnt herself before the actual death of her husband. All this goes to show

that the remarriage of widows and satī, though highly disfavoured, were not altogether forbidden nor too rare.

DRESS, ORNAMENTS AND COSMETICS

In high families, fine garments were worn and different types of cosmetics were used for bodily care and beautification. From Bāṇa's description we learn that the king's public appearances were marked by the lavish display of luxury. From the figures carved on Gupta coins, it appears that kings sometimes adopted the Kushāna dress of long coats and trousers. Both Kushāna and Indian styles were current. The clothing of the people as reported by Yuan Chwang was made of silk, muslin, linen and fine wool. Ladies used to wear the sāri and bodice as well as an upper garment. The figures of the chief queen wearing a sāri and dupaṭṭā (scarf) testify that the people appreciated the aesthetics of dressing. According to Bāṇa, the dhoti was worn in those days as it is today.

The large-scale use of sewn garments in India during the Kushāna period influenced the costumes of those who came in close contact with the royal court. Both men and women wore well-cut tunics and shorts. Yuan Chwang and I-Tsing stated that in the seventh century Indian clothing was normally without tailoring, but there is reason to believe that both uncut as well as tailored garments were worn in the Gupta period. This is proved from the costumes shown on coins, paintings and terracottas. In the Lion-Slayer coins of Chandragupta II, the dress is appropriate and simple. The king wears a cap or turban, a half-sleeved tunic and a dhoti, sometimes half-way to the knee. The dhoti was sewn or fastened with a belt.

Besides fine Indian costumes, both men and women were fond of wearing different kinds of ornaments. Archæological evidence is very helpful in this respect. Rings, necklaces, ear-rings and bangles were worn by both sexes. The variety of the coiffures of men and women is illustrated by numerous terracotta figurines. From Rājaghāt we have a good many such figures with curly hair and different hair styles. *Bṛihat Saṁhitā* and the works of Kālidāsa mention the extensive use by both sexes of scented oils, hair lotions and other perfumes. The same authorities refer to the use of sandal paste and camphor for the hair and body. Yuan Chwang mentions that Indians (male and female) stained their teeth red and black. Probably the red colour was due to the use of betel leaves but black (missi) was purposely applied to darken the teeth.

SOCIAL GATHERINGS

Social gatherings had their own importance in the life of people. Periodical entertainments such as the Samāja or ghāṭa (assembly) added to the joy and zest of life. There were various types of social gatherings. The Samājas usually took place on appointed days when hosts entertained their guests. Fa-Hien, while describing Pāṭaliputra, refers to the annual Ratha-Yātrā ceremony. The image of God was taken out in procession with great enthusiasm. Yuan Chwang has described the large assemblage at Prayāg when Harsha made lavish donations.

There were many other kinds of entertainment. Hunting was very popular with kings and has been depicted on the gold coins of the period. Gambling and taming parrots were popular pastimes of the common people. Mention is made of all these in the literature of the period.

FOOD

References in literature and the accounts of Chinese travellers do not indicate any noticeable peculiarities as regards food. They give a list of foods like rice, wheat, barley, sugar, pulses, butter, oil and so on and so forth. The fourth-century Chinese traveller Fa-Hien, however, stated that killing animals, drinking wine and eating onions or garlic were unknown in Madhyadeśa. This might be true only of monks and priestly classes. Meat was certainly eaten in those days. More detailed and accurate seems to be the account of Yuan Chwang who states that milk, ghee, sugar, oil and wheat were the main articles of food. People used plates made of iron, copper, silver and even of gold.

INSTITUTION OF ĀŚRAMAS

The institution of Āśramas was unique and characteristic of Indian society. According to the Āśrama Dharma, a person's life was divided into four stages, Brahmacharya, Gṛihastha, Vānaprastha and Sannyās. In ancient India, education started at the age of eight with Brahmacharya. The student usually lived with his Guru for about twelve years. In some cases student-life went beyond the age of twenty-four. In the pre-Gupta period, student-life began with the Upanayana, a ceremony which initiated the scholar into Brahmacharya. Later on it was connected with the ceremony of Vidyārambha, or beginning of study. Students generally completed their

education in twelve years; but we learn from Yuan Chwang that the term sometimes ended at the thirtieth year.

Students led a life of service and begged for their maintenance. I-Tsing describes the manner of serving the teacher. In theBuddhist order, which was different from the Brāhmaṇical system, the novice entered monastic life. Monastic discipline was laid down on the basis of Brāhmaṇical texts. Yuan Chwang refers to a class of wandering teachers. He speaks highly of the learning and zeal of Brāhmaṇa teachers. For novices in the monastic order stress was laid on the study of religious texts, while lay pupils read mainly secular books.

In the Brāhmaṇical system, the Brahmachāri after completing his student life performed 'Samāvartana' (returning home) and entered the second āśrama, Gṛihastha (householder). He took up his duties as a householder after marriage. Bāṇa describes gifts that used to be offered by Gṛihasthas and the five Yajnas performed by them. In historical records, we find little information about the āśrama system in those days, but the Smṛitis throw much light on the subject.

The third stage was that of Vānaprastha (retirement), after the age of fifty. This is to be distinguished from Sannyās, the next and the last stage of the Āśrama Dharma. Sannyās means complete renunciation. He who enters Sannyās wanders from place to place and begs alms for his livelihood. Bāṇa has mentioned different orders of Brāhmaṇical Sannyāsis which were quite different from Buddhist or Jaina orders. The kings respected Sannyāsis and did not oblige them to come to the royal court. Even women embraced Sannyās in those days. Bāṇa has given the description of female Parivrājikās (wandering Sannyāsinīs) with Rudrāksha and yellow clothes. Yuan Chwang corroborates this description and also describes a class of Sannyāsis with skull garlands! Sannyāsis in due course, began to have monasteries and maths of their own on the Buddhist pattern. They received munificent gifts and by and by Sannyāsis began to become owners of property donated to maths. Some of them even became very powerful and controlled vast properties. They started a hierarchy of disciples and that was the foundation of the math organization in India.

C. Education, Sciences, Language and Literature

In the Gupta period, the same system of education prevailed as previously. Teachers taught as a matter of duty and not for payment. Kālidāsa in *Mālavikāgnimitra* condemned the teacher who charged

fees from students. He derided it as selling and commercializing knowledge. The household of every learned Brāhmaṇa, who cared to teach, was a centre of education. Bāṇa in his *Harshacharita* has stated that in his village every Brāhmaṇa was a Guru, teaching Vedas to students. The Gupta records supply us further information regarding the system of Brāhmaṇical education. The Vedas, with their six branches (Śaḍaṅg), were taught in the beginning, but most probably all the students were not expected to master the Vedas. Particular śākhās or sections were allotted hereditarily to particular families, and students learnt those portions along with other subjects. While discussing early education, Bāṇa told the king that 'vyākaraṇa' (grammar) was the first subject to be taught. After that, logic and 'mīmāṁsā' (karmakānd) formed part of the curriculum. This is confirmed by Yuan Chwang who has described the system of education in Brāhmaṇical centres. According to him, the child was taught letters in the very beginning, and then 'vyākaraṇa', art, āyurveda (science of medicine), logic and 'mīmāṁsā'. I-Tsing also agrees with the same account about the teaching of the alphabet and grammar of Pāṇinī.

The survey of educational institutions reveals that on occasions private teachers used to congregate in 'agrahāra' villages (given to learned Brāhmaṇas) or in capitals of kingdoms or in famous holy places. For instance, we find that the Brāhmaṇas of Ayodhyā were famous in the exposition of maṇtra, sūtra and bhāshyas. The same must have been the case in other holy places like Vārānasi and Mathurā. Learned Brāhmaṇas in many cases enjoyed the revenue of the land assigned to them by the State. The donees of the 'agrahāra' villages were not merely devoted to their own studies but were themselves famous teachers who attracted students from far and near. The general level of culture and learning was high among Brāhmaṇas during this period but the same was not the case with other castes. The gradual disappearance of the Upanayana (initiation) ceremony in cases of persons other than Brāhmaṇas, proved to be detrimental to Vedic studies as well as to the general and cultural education of the country.

Besides the centres of Brāhmaṇical education, Buddhist monasteries developed into big educational institutions in the latter part of this period. Monasteries were not new. They formed a part of Buddhist religious organization. The monastery of Pāṭaliputra contained about 600 monks who were taught Sanskrit grammar at

the beginning of their education and their monastic life. Fa-Hien is said to have spent three years at Pāṭaliputra in studying Sanskrit. This centre of education was known far and wide and in A.D. 539 a Chinese mission was sent to Magadha to collect original texts. The services of Mahāyāna scholars were requisitioned to translate original religious texts into the Chinese language.

NĀLANDĀ AND VIKRAMŚILĀ

The subjects for study embraced various branches of sacred and secular learning. Four Vedas, six Vedāṅgas and Itihās Purāṇas formed the main curriculum of Brāhmaṇical learning and study. In the case of princes 'arthaśāstra', music and the art of warfare were also added to the list. The Chinese-Buddhist pilgrims give a detailed account of subjects taught in the Buddhist and Brāhmaṇical institutions. After studying elementary subjects and grammar, the novice learnt hetuvidyā (logic), abhidharma (philosophy and metaphysics) and vinaya (religious discipline). Buddhist studies also included some Brāhmaṇical texts, which were studied thoroughly by the monks. The teaching was comprehensive. The Nālandā institute was meant for higher and specialized studies.

The most important international Buddhist centres of learning were Nālandā and Vikramśilā. The State of Bihar is justly proud of these ancient educational centres which attracted students from foreign lands. Fa-Hien, who visited the big monastery of Nālandā (55 miles south-east of Patna) in A.D. 410 does not refer to its educational importance. But Nālandā rapidly developed into a Mahāvihāra, thanks to the patronage of a number of Gupta emperors. Hindu kings contributed the lion's share of equipment and endowments to this great Buddhist university. Excavations have shown that Nālandā University covered an area at least one mile long and half a mile broad. The buildings, of two or three storeys, were solid and expensive. Some Chinese travellers have described the grandeur of Nālandā and their statements that Nālandā had impressive buildings (Epi. I. XX. p. 48) have received corroboration from contemporary records. Student-monks were lodged in dormitories specially meant for them. The university had received as endowments two hundred rich villages as well as other presents. Free board, clothing and medicine were offered to students there.

Nālandā, however, was not a mere monastery but a very famous centre of learning. There were many scholars of repute and the head

abbot was known for his scholarship. The Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang says that some thousands of brethren were living in the establishment. Students from all parts of India and from distant foreign countries sought admission to the university. Yuan Chwang and I-Tsing were not the only scholars attracted to Nālandā, but many others from distant lands like China, Korea and Tibet joined this university and spent a considerable time there studying and copying manuscripts.

The curriculum at Nālandā was very comprehensive. The Mahāyāna school of Buddhism predominated there; but the texts of rival schools and other sects were also taught. Newcomers were usually taught grammar and language in other Buddhist monasteries, but Nālandā being an institute for higher education, the works of famous scholars were studied. The Hīnayāna works were in Pāli; so along with Sanskrit, Mahāyānists also studied Pāli. A survey of the subjects taught shows that the curriculum was not sectarian or narrow. Hindu religious texts and the works of Hindu writers were not neglected. Subjects like grammar, logic and literature were common to both Hindus and Buddhists. Buddhists themselves inform us that the three Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, the Vedānta and the Śāṅkhya philosophy were taught there along with Hetuvidyā, Śabdavidyā and Sūtra literature. Yuan Chwang devoted his time to the study of a wide range of subjects from astronomy and medicine, to art and logic.

This famous university maintained a splendid library to meet the needs of hundreds of teachers and thousands of students. No doubt the library had a very good collection of Buddhist literature, but Hindu works, too, existed in abundance. This is supported by I-Tsing who says that he had copied at Nālandā 400 Sanskrit works, totalling five lac verses.

From the 8th century onwards, Nālandā teachers began to take an active part in the propagation of the Buddhist religion and culture in Tibet. Many works were translated into Tibetan and the monk Śāntarakshita was invited to Tibet in 740.

The second famous international Buddhist centre of learning, Vikramśilā, was located in the modern Bhagalpur district of Bihar State. The monks of this University (monastery), founded by king Dharmapāla in the 8th century, were distinguished scholars, and it was no wonder that the fame of Vikramśilā spread beyond the Himalayas. There was regular intercourse between Vikramśilā

and Tibet. It is stated that a special guest-house was constructed for the use of Tibetan scholars there. A good many Buddhist scholars wrote works in Sanskrit and translated them into Tibetan.

Grammar, logic and metaphysics, tantra were among the main subjects specialized in at this institution. The curriculum at Vikramśilā University was not as comprehensive as that of Nālandā. The gradation of the courses however, was more systematic than that of any other centre of ancient Indian education. In the period under review, this University was still in the making and the numerical strength of the establishment therefore cannot be given; but it increased enormously during the following centuries (9th-12th centuries A.D.) The academic administration was vested in a council of six Dvārapaṇdits presided over by the chief abbot. It may also be noted that unlike any other ancient institution, diplomas and titles were given to the Vikramśilā students by the then reigning kings of Bengal.

THE GROWTH OF THE SCIENCES

No comprehensive work or treatise of this period has been handed down to us but a few books in the nature of class notes have been preserved and we have to draw our own conclusions from them. A survey of such texts gives us an idea of the conditions and progress of different sciences. The famous mathematician Āryabhaṭṭa, a resident of Bihar, wrote his book *Āryabhaṭṭiyam* in A.D. 499 at Pāṭaliputra. Some problems of mathematics are dealt with in this important work, but besides dealing with arithmetical progression (both of numbers and their sequences), the work describes several geometrical characteristics of the circle. It further discusses projective geometry and gives a value to π. It is universally admitted that Indians had a lead over contemporary European mathematicians.

In the field of astronomy, Āryabhaṭṭa was the first Indian astronomer to discover that the earth rotates on its axis. He postulated an epicyclic theory of his own to explain the various planetary motions. He accurately predicted the duration of an eclipse and the total obscuration of the sun and the moon. All these are striking examples of advances in astronomy. Āryabhaṭṭa enjoyed a very high reputation as a mathematician and astronomer. He had a number of disciples of whom Lāṭadeva became famous as an expert on all sciences.

When we come to survey the progress of astronomy down to the

4th century A.D., we find that the Paitāmaha Siddhānta system, which was almost the same as that of the Vedāṅga Jyotisha, was in use. It is during this period that the Vaśishtha Siddhānta, the Paulica Siddhānta, the Romaka Siddhānta and the Sūrya Siddhānta made further progress in the field of science. The noted astronomer of the 6th century, Varāhamihira (who wrote in 550 and died in 587) has incorporated in his *Panchasiddhāntikā*, information about the five Siddhāntas of earlier date. As has already been stated, Paitāmaha belonged to the pre-scientific period, but the other four showed a new spirit and approach in this age. The names—Romaka (Roman) and Paulica (Greek, Paulus) clearly show that these two Siddhāntas bear non-Indian names; but the Sūrya Siddhānta shows us the process of adaptation of the new science to Indian ideas. None of the Siddhāntas which Varāhamihira had before him, has come down to us in their original form. Even the Romaka Siddhānta was commented upon in 505 by Lāta and later on revised drastically by Śrīsena. As already mentioned, before the discovery of the *Panchasiddhāntikā*, credit for the introduction of new ideas into Indian astronomy was given to Āryabhaṭṭa of Pāṭaliputra.

In addition to Āryabhaṭṭa and Lāta, Varāhamihira mentions more names of scientists in the field of astronomy. The most important of these was Brahmagupta who wrote his *Brahmasiddhānta* near Multan in the 6th century A.D.

In the realm of medicine, we find a summary of medical teaching in the *Ashtāṅga-Saṁgraha* by Vāgbhata who wrote in the 6th century. Another contemporary work on medicine is *Navanītakam*, discovered by Bower in Eastern Turkestan at Kuchar. It is not a systematic work on medical science but merely a manual intended for the use of busy practitioners. In big cities like Pāṭaliputra there were well-managed hospitals where students were given regular practical training. According to Yuan Chwang, Nāgārjuna, the noted Buddhist philosopher was a student of chemistry and metallurgy. There is no doubt that these branches of science also made considerable progress in the Gupta period. Metallic medicinal preparations are referred to by Charaka and Suśruta. The use of mercury and iron with their proper treatment was advocated by Varāhamihira. His *Bṛihat Saṁhitā* is a mine of useful information. The casting of copper images was not unknown in the Gupta period. The Sultanganj (Bhagalpur district, Bihar) copper image of Lord Buddha is a proof of the progress of that science and craft during that age.

SANSKRIT LANGUAGE AND PRĀKṚIT

Sanskrit was not only a spoken language during the period under review, but was also the language of literature. We find that except in the case of heterodox sects and religions, Sanskrit was always used from earliest times, both for religious as well as for secular purposes. Sanskrit therefore continued as a literary language throughout India even while Prākṛit was flourishing. Sanskrit language and literature got a fillip and became dominant in this period because of two reasons, one ideological and the other practical. The changes in the religious beliefs of people were reflected in the emphasis on the different languages. Sanskrit was the language of Vedic culture and therefore after the Brāhmaṇical revival under Pushyamitra (*c.* 188 B.C.), it regained lost ground, even at times perhaps at the expense of Prākṛit. The practical reason was that Sanskrit was the common language of the intelligentsia throughout India. This privilege was not enjoyed by any other language at the time. It developed as a bond of cultural unity. Important books were written in Sanskrit. Discussions among the learned were carried on in Sanskrit. Law was codified in Sanskrit. All public religious rites and domestic rituals were performed in Sanskrit. Thus the Sanskrit language was in constant use in various forms and for various purposes. Sanskrit was not only the language of Vedic religion but also of secular literature and science.

The epigraphical tradition established by Aśoka continued for several centuries. But changes in language and content could be noticed. After the Christian era, Sanskrit too came to be used in the adulation of kings and in the giving of grants. Prākṛit in the inscriptions was almost entirely ousted by Sanskrit by the 4th and 5th centuries, and eventually completely discontinued from the Gupta period. Sanskrit was used as the State language by the Gupta kings of Magadha and all royal proclamations were issued in that language. The Gupta records of Bihar are all in Sanskrit and what is more important, we find even Gupta gold coin inscriptions mostly in metrical Sanskrit. It is not surprising that Sanskrit revived with the revival of Brāhmaṇical culture.

Significantly enough, even the Buddhists began to use more and more Sanskrit by the beginning of the Christian era. They used this language mainly for disquisitions, which proves that Sanskrit was the language of the intellectuals and had established its ascendancy in the north. This was the beginning of the services rendered by both

Buddhists and Jainas to Sanskrit. First Buddhists and then Jainas wrote in Sanskrit on many subjects besides religion. It was the main language of the Mahāyāna school of Buddhism, and this is confirmed by Yuan Chwang who states that in the 7th century, Buddhist disputants used Sanskrit officially in their debates. We can say that Nālandā and Vikramśilā, the two great Buddhist centres of learning in Bihar, used Sanskrit as the medium. The study of Sanskrit was so current that I-Tsing spent six months in learning Sanskrit and in reading Buddhist Scriptures.

The Jainas showed more conservatism but eventually even they accepted the use of Sanskrit as legitimate and necessary. It is said that up to the time of finalizing the canon of the Śvetāmbaras (at the Council of Valabhi in 526) they used Prākṛit. But afterwards they turned to the use of Sanskrit.

The adoption of Sanskrit by Buddhists and later by Jainas widened its field. The sanskritization of Buddhist religious literature and teaching took place gradually and ended in the adoption of pure classical Sanskrit. The language used by the Mahāsaṅghikā school was a mixed Sanskrit, but the successors of Aśvaghosha adopted all the characteristics of the kāvya style. The logicians and philosophers followed suit and orthodox religious works also began to be written in Sanskrit.

The Sanskrit language in this period, possessed the traditional sanctity and the developed beauty of form. It became the court language, but Prākṛit remained the spoken language of the masses. This widened the gulf between Sanskrit and other languages, for Sanskrit was the tongue of the learned and educated classes. Charaka tells us that Sanskrit was used in discussions in medical schools of the day. The *Kāmasutra* of Vātsyāyana urges men of fashion to use Sanskrit in their conversation in polite society. In the dramas of this period, both Sanskrit and Prākṛit were used. In *Kumārasambhava* by Kālidāsa, we find Sarasvatī addressing Śiva in Sanskrit and his bride in Prākṛit. Brāhmaṇas, kings and other persons of high status used Sanskrit while female and inferior characters spoke Prākṛit. Prākṛit, being the spoken language of the people, differed from place to place.

The Prākṛit used by dramatists shows a steady advance over the Aśvaghosha kind. Bhāsa and Kālidāsa sometimes used Mahārāśtrī (a form of Prākṛit) as the medium for the erotic lyric. Mahārāśtrī was the most important form of Prākṛit used in Sanskrit dramas.

The *Prākṛit-Prakāśa* of Vararuchi mainly deals with Mahārāṣṭrī Prākṛit because of its importance. The second form, Śaurasenī, was a spoken language round about the region of Śurasena, while the third, Ardha-Māgadhi was the language of Jaina canonical works. All the early religious literature of the Jainas is composed in this type of Prākṛit. Māgadhi was the spoken language of Magadha. It was held sacred by the Buddhists and they proclaimed it as the language of Ādi-purusha.

When the Mahāyānists began favouring Sanskrit as the medium of religious propaganda, Māgadhi lost its high position. Prākṛit ceased to be in common use in Bihar as far as cultured people and men of position were concerned. It may be stated here that Māgahi, one of the dialects of modern Bihar, developed from Māgadhi Prākṛit.

SANSKRIT LITERATURE

A survey of the Sanskrit literature of the Gupta period throws much light on some aspects of society and on some social problems of the day. Besides this, the progress of Sanskrit language and literature shows that there was an all-round cultural development, and the attraction and love for Sanskrit was great. Gupta emperors and Harshavardhana, the king of Kanauj, were patrons of Sanskrit learning. Court poets of the time were prolific writers of Sanskrit poetry and were very much encouraged.

It was a creative period, and composition in ornate prose and in the kāvya style was very popular. The verses in Gupta inscriptions and coin-legends indicate the flourishing of kāvya. The development presupposes works on poetry and drama. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata composed in an earlier period, continued to guide the dramatist of this age.

Kālidāsa introduced poetry which was new, perfect, incomparable, great and enduring. The works of Kālidāsa are associated with the great achievements of Gupta power and glory. He was the court poet of Chandragupta Vikramāditya and is the most famous and gifted of all poets in Sanskrit literature. There is a tradition in Mithilā that Kālidāsa received his education in that region. Magadha is referred to again and again in his *Raghuvaṁśa* and *Kumārasambhava.*

The progress of epigraphic research sheds considerable light on the history of court poetry. Some epigraphs of this period have preserved beautiful specimens of classical poetry. The examination of the 'prasaśti' (praise) proves that the poetical style prevailing from the

4th to the 6th century did not differ much from that of classical kāvya. The foremost among the panegyrists was Harisena, whose kāvya style shows mastery of theme, rivalling that of Kālidāsa and Dandin. The 'praśasti' of Samūdragupta later inscribed on the original Aśokan pillar of Kauśāmbī, is undoubtedly a poem of great merit. It belongs to the variety of kāvya known as Champu. Vatsabhaṭṭi, the author of the Mandasore 'praśasti' of Kumāragupta I, was a poet of no less importance. This all goes to show that in the 5th century rich kāvya literature did exist.

Amongst Sanskrit prose writers, Subandhu was the most important. His work *Vāsavadattā* is mentioned by Bāṇa as 'quelling the pride of all poets.' Bāṇa, the court poet of Harshavardhana of Kanauj was himself another great writer. He was a resident of Shahabad district (Bihar) and living on the bank of the Son. A village named after him even now continues to bear his name. His works *Kādambarī* and *Harshacharita* preserve for us an account of his own fame and that of his patron Harshavardhana. *Kādambarī* is a 'kathā' (a story) while *Harshacharita* is an 'ākhyāikā' (that which is current by tradition). *Kādambarī* was adopted as a model by many later writers.

Though there was a great development in Sanskrit language and literature, works on Sanskrit grammar were rare. The outstanding popularity and very high quality of the work of Pāṇinī and Patañjali rendered the birth of other great works extremely difficult. A Buddhist scholar named Chandragomina composed a book on grammar named *Chandra-Vyākaraṇa*. In the same century, the 6th, Amarasiṁha compiled *Amarkosha*, a popular Sanskrit dictionary.

As regards Sanskrit works on religion and philosophy, it may be mentioned that in the early Gupta period the custodians of the Purāṇas brought them up to date by bringing in the history of Kaliyuga down to the year 350. Some of the Smṛitis like those of Kātyāyana, Nārada and others belong to this period. The Smṛitikāras were devoted to the discussion of civil laws and legal procedure. *Kāmaṅdaka Nītisāra* was written probably by a minister of the Guptas.

THE RISE OF POETICS

We know very little of the study of poetics in this period. But the fact that Pāṇinī does not mention 'alaṁkārśāstra' (science of rhetoric) certainly suggests that dramaturgy came earlier than the study of poetics. We find vague references to Kāśyapa's and Yaksa's knowledge of discussions on similes (upamās) but some definite information

on poetics is found in Chapter XVI of *Bhārat Nāṭyaśāstra*, a treatise on dramaturgy. This masterly work may be placed at an earlier date than the works of Bhāsa and Kālidāsa. The topics which were to engage later writers on poetics appear in an elementary and undeveloped form in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. The great merit of this treatise is that it develops the doctrine of 'rasa' or sentiments with its eight subdivisions. It also mentions figures of speech like the simile, the metaphor and so on. There are detailed discussions on these topics by the earlier school of poetics and in the Agnipurāṇa as well. Bhāmaha, a gifted writer of the age was the first to discuss poetics during this period. *Kāvyālaṁkāra*, an original and pioneer work in Sanskrit establishes the theory of alaṁkāra (rhetoric) as the soul of poetry. He also classifies the various figures of speech in his work. We may say that the first step was to distinguish Anuprāsa (alliteration of single letters) from Yamaka, the repetition of syllables. Bhāmaha gives preference to poetry in which figures are an essential feature.

The second famous author on poetics of this period is Dandin. He was a follower of Bhāmaha, and used freely the heritage of many predecessors whose works are lost. He presents to us fully developed and elaborate doctrines. His noted work *Kāvyādarśa* supports the theory of 'alaṁkāra' as expounded by Bhāmaha. He was also a famous prose writer and his work *Daśakumāracharita* is a prose romance which deals with the story of ten princes. Dandin rejects the difference between 'kathā' and 'ākhyāyikā', which appears to be thoroughly sound. To him poetry is a person adorned with ornaments. 'Alaṁkāra' lends beauty to poetry. Speaking of verse forms, he mentions Mahākāvya (epic) and Muktaka (single verse). The use of different metres is advocated. With reference to prose, he mentions Champu (verse mixed with prose) along with 'kathā' and 'ākhyāyikā'. The science of poetics was highly developed in the classical age as well as in the post-Gupta period.

D. Economic Conditions

In the period under review, Imperial Gupta rulers brought about the unification of almost the whole of the Gangā valley. They were able to establish a strong and well-organized government in northern India, which reflected favourably upon the economic progress of the people. There was an all-round development of agriculture, industry and trade in the Gupta period. The Junagarh inscription of Skandagupta states that the people were prosperous and wealthy.

Agriculture was the mainstay of the majority. Land in villages was owned in separate holdings for proper cultivation and irrigation. Yuan Chwang gives us a long list of various agricultural products of the day. The list comprises rice, wheat, ginger, mustard, mangoes, plantains, jackfruit, plums and so on. Among the dozen countries mentioned by him, Magadha occupied an important place which produced rice for grandees. We further learn from I-Tsing that wheat flour was abundant in the north-west and rich in Magadha. We have literary evidence in Kālidāsa that rice and sugar were produced in large quantities. Thus from ancient times Magadha had been a producer of fine quality rice.

INDUSTRY, TRADE AND THEIR ORGANIZATION

Besides agriculture, industries were highly developed. Literary evidence supports archæological sources in this matter. Both refer to various types of industry and trade which were carried on through organized agencies like guilds (gaṇa or śreṇī). In Dharmaśāstra literature, guilds were regarded as parts of bigger bodies called 'samūha' which managed their affairs according to established laws.

Kātyāyana says that property given or debt incurred by a partner, authorized by the rest, was binding upon all. Members violating the agreement were liable to punishment and other penalties. The business of the group (called Nigam or Śreṇī) was managed by some advisers who did not belong to any one profession. The Mandasore inscription of Kumāragupta I supplies this information about members of the Śreṇī. They belonged to diverse but allied professions and organized themselves into a weavers' guild. In the epigraph of Skandagupta we have a similar reference to an 'oilmen's guild'. The sealings and seals of the Gupta period unearthed from Bhita (near Allahabad) and Vaiśālī belonged to various guilds, traders and artisans. The poet Kālidāsa (Raghu) refers to Śreṇī or Naigama, i.e. corporate guilds. These guilds were sometimes given endowments for the purpose of paying interest or a fixed quantity of certain materials to particular temples. They also performed some judicial functions connected with their members. The textile industry was highly developed in the Gupta age and fabrics of silk, cotton, wool, and linen were manufactured. Bāṇa has described how on the occasion of Princess Rājyaśrī's marriage, linen, silk and textiles with designs *(chitrapaṭa)* were sent as presents by the king of Assam. Yuan Chwang

too refers to many such fabrics. The study of Gupta sculpture reveals the same fact. We find very fine clothing on the figures of Gupta rulers on gold coins. The Buddha at Sarnath is clothed in almost transparent cloth (chīvara) of very fine texture. Kālidāsa also mentions the import of Chinese silk. Yuan Chwang informs us that Mathurā produced a fine striped variety of cotton cloth in the seventh century A.D. The royal costumes as illustrated on Gupta gold coins as well as the costumes of different classes of men and women as depicted in Ajantā and Bāgh caves, prove that the textile industry was highly developed.

For references to the metal industry, we have to depend mostly on archæological evidence. The artistic specimens of the Gupta period testify to the high skill of artisans in this period. A fine example of steel manufacture is the famous iron pillar at Mehrauli which bears the inscription of Chandragupta II. The Buddha copper image of Sultanganj (Bhagalpur, Bihar) is another specimen, which bears testimony to the skill of coppersmiths in those days. The goldsmiths too were second to none. They manufactured a large number of gold coins for Gupta emperors. Numerous images of the Gupta period show how people used to adorn themselves with different kinds of ornaments of gold and precious stones. Yuan Chwang saw several shrines of brass and bronze at Nālandā. There is sufficient literary evidence of the use of ornaments by both men and women. The science of testing jewels (ratnaparīkshā) is one of the branches of knowledge mentioned in the *Kāmasutra* of Vātsyāyana.

Fine icons and terracotta figurines were very popular. They seem to have been manufactured on a fairly large scale by artists, like potters highly skilled in the art of moulding and casting terracotta figures. Very fine terracotta pieces have come to light in Vaiśālī, Bhīta and Rājghāt. The beautiful terracotta figurines, while exemplifying folk art, also throw light on certain aspects of the life of the period.

The testimony of Chinese Buddhist pilgrims proves that there was regular trade between India and other parts of the East and West. From the 4th to the 7th century, Tāmralipti was a famous seaport in Bengal. Important seaports on the western coast were connected to Pāṭaliputra via Ujjain. Probably there was a highway going from Pāṭaliputra to Afghanistan which was called Mahāpatha by Kālidāsa. This road branched off from Kauśāmbī towards

the western sea-coast, connecting Broach to the Gupta capital. We have some idea also of articles of trade. Articles mentioned by Yuan Chwang and Kālidāsa were products of the Malaya hills and the Pāndya country. They include pepper, cardamom, sandalwood and pearls. Medicinal plants and saffron were exported from Kashmir as reported by Yuan Chwang. Silks and horses were imported from China and Arabia respectively in the Gupta age. We know that in the Gupta and post-Gupta periods horses from Vanayu (Arabia) and Pārasika (Persia) were imported via N. W. India for military purposes. It may be stated in brief that mainly fine textiles, precious stones and spices were exported from India while gold, salt and horses were imported.

COINAGE

In the field of commerce and foreign trade, coinage has a very important role to play. Chandragupta I initiated gold coinage for internal exchange. Probably gold coins were minted at Pāṭaliputra, but the king did not issue more than one type known as the 'Chandragupta and Kumāradevī type'. His successor Samūdragupta issued six different types of gold coins which give much information about his career. As the activities of the Gupta emperors increased, the types of coins were multiplied and we find several varieties of gold coins. Samūdragupta, after completing his victorious campaign, started the Aśvamedha type of coin for distribution among *Brāhmaṇas. His son, Chandragupta II, followed in the footsteps of his* father and was also the originator of the silver currency of his age. He issued silver coins closely imitating the Kshatrapas of western India after defeating them in Mālwa and Kathiawar. The minting of coins was at its highest peak in the reign of Kumāragupta I. During his régime fourteen different types of gold coins were issued, besides silver coins. It is unfortunate that towards the end of his life, Kumāragupta I had to face the invasions of foreign tribes—Hūṇas and others. These invasions caused a decline in coin production and during the reign of Skandagupta only two types of gold coins were minted. It is somewhat surprising that no big hoard of Gupta coins has yet been found in the capital. Gupta silver coins were minted in Madhyadeśa and their pattern was copied by different ruling families of northern India. The Maukharis, Vardhanas and Hūṇas issued similar silver coins up to the 7th century. A survey of minting up to the end of the 7th century shows that during the Gupta period, the

abundant gold currency helped the progress of inland and foreign trade. The Bayānā hoard (Pl. X. Fig. 25) is a testimony to this fact. It is assumed that some trader while going from Pāṭaliputra towards the west concealed these gold coins in a safe place near Bharatpur (Central India) because of some political disturbance. A study of the coinage of the post-Gupta period shows that during the latter half of the age, trade had greatly declined, and foreign trade was little cared for. After the Imperial Guptas, the Maukharis, Vardhanas and Later Gupta kings were preoccupied with internal problems and could not pay proper attention to trade and commerce. After Skandagupta, gold coins were no longer of pure metal but were mixed with some alloy. Only one Archer-type coin was continued for some generations during the régime of the Later Gupta kings. Other ruling dynasties were satisfied with silver coins because they were not directly connected with foreign trade which necessarily required gold coins. The diminishing of gold and silver currency in this period clearly points to the decline of trade with other countries.

There are two records of the Gupta period which give some idea of the cost of living. The Sānchi inscription speaks of a donation of twenty-five 'dināras' (Gupta gold coin), half of which went to the Buddhist Saṅgha. The amount was spent on feeding ten monks as well as for burning two lamps in the temple. The Gadhawā inscription also mentions a gift of twelve 'dināras' to a monk, which shows that twelve 'dināras' were sufficient for a monk to maintain himself for a year. One 'dināra' was equal in weight to 121 grains and contained about twelve 'maśas' of gold. It may be assumed that one 'dināra' was sufficient for an individual for one whole month. We have no knowledge of the exchange value of gold during the Gupta period; so it is difficult to give an exact idea of the annual budget of a person. People living in cities, especially those of the upper strata, must have been going in for fine clothes, perfumes, cosmetics and other luxuries which must have added to the cost of living.

During this period, several towns became prosperous, thanks to commercial activity. Town life had become luxurious and the high standard of living is reflected in the literary works of the time. Fa-Hien has mentioned that the people of Madhyadeśa were prosperous and happy. He specially refers to the great prosperity of Magadha. In Bihar, Pāṭaliputra and Vaiśālī were the two most advanced cities where different corporate guilds functioned successfully. The seals discovered at Vaiśālī belong to the office of Sārthavāha or Naigama.

These guilds acted as co-operative banks also. The other two cities worthy of mention are Ujjain and Daśapurā. The former is described by Kālidāsa in his *Meghadūta* while the latter's beauty has been praised by the poet Vātsabhaṭṭi in the Mandasore record. Yuan Chwang has admired the wealth of the people of a number of regions. The general prevalence of peace and prosperity is indicated by the rich and varied specimens of sculpture and paintings. The major part of the country undoubtedly enjoyed great prosperity as is proved by the fine dress and ornaments of the king and people in general.

E. Fine Arts

Few parts of India witnessed such remarkable efflorescence of art and architecture during the Gupta and late Gupta periods as the State of Bihar. The prominent role of Bihar in the domain of fine arts was due as much to the rich cultural heritage and genius of her people as to her material prosperity, assured by the dominant political status she enjoyed from *c.* 500 B.C. to A.D. *c.* 600. Although the main centres of Gupta plastic art in North India were located at Sārnāth and Mathurā, a powerful eastern idiom of the same art was developed in Eastern India, comprising Bihar, Bengal and Assam, with Bihar as the focal point. The sculpture of Eastern India shared with that of North India the qualities of mature refinement, rhythmic balance, sensitive modelling, aristocratic detachment and spiritual glow which characterized all Gupta art. The art of Eastern India, however, was distinguished by a subtle sensuousness and emotional warmth which added a human charm to it. The emotional and sensuous effects were achieved by slight variations in modelling or in angles or in facial expression. The development of these distinguishing traits is explained, among other factors, by the peculiar ethnological and cultural make-up of the peoples of Eastern India.

Bihar has the distinction of possessing the earliest datable Gupta sculpture, viz., the Bodh Gaya image of the Buddha of the year 64 of Mahārājā Trikamala. The image, dating from the fourth century A.D. represents the Buddha in a characteristic seated posture with a conspicuous protuberance over the head covered with short snail-like curls, his countenance reflecting wisdom and meditative calm. This piece of sculpture belongs to the early phase of Gupta plastic art when the heaviness of Mathurā art had been newly brought under

the discipline of stern modelling and a firm, almost geometrical, outline. The unique importance of this image in the history of plastic art lies in the fact that it set the pattern for the evolved and distinctive Buddha image not only in India but throughout the entire continent of Asia.

The Gupta emperors were known to be patrons of art and culture and it was but natural that Pāṭaliputra should be the centre of contemporary art. This is attested to by the excavations at Kumrahār, the Gupta levels of which have yielded, besides a few stone sculptures, numerous terracotta human and animal figurines and large stucco and terracotta plaques, representing figures of the Buddha, mithunas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas and dvārapālas. While the larger figures are elegantly executed in the style of Gupta sculpture, the smaller figurines usually show a greater freedom and sense of abandon, as behoves the popular art of terracotta. A stone head of the Buddha from Kumrahār, now in the Patna Museum, is as expressive as it is delicately modelled and glows with the radiance of serene contemplation, like the better known contemporary Buddha heads from Sārnāth.

Among other centres of Gupta art in Bihar, Rajgir, Nālandā and Vaiśālī are noteworthy. The Gupta shrine of Maṇi-nāga at Rajgir was decorated with stucco sculptures of Ganeśa, Vishṇu, Nāgas and Nāgīs. One of these Nāgī sculptures (Pl. IX. Fig. 22) is considered a masterpiece of Gupta art on account of its poise and balance, soft and luminous texture, melting outline, and subtle emotional appeal. This sculpture is one of the loveliest creations in the eastern idiom of Gupta art for which Bihar is justly famous. Rajgir has also yielded some rock-cut Vaishṇava reliefs of an early Gupta date, of which a figure of Vishṇu seated on Garuḍa (now in the Nālandā Museum) deserves notice on account of its linear accent.

From Vaiśālī come two Gupta Chaturmukha Liṅgas, one of them being inscribed, and a fine image of Kārtikeya. The last-named, now kept in the local shrine of Hari Katorā, is represented seated on the peacock and resembles the Bhumara Kārtikeya in the representation of the god's attributes and jewellery, including a necklace with a large circular pendant. The quiet dignity on the face of this statue is remarkable.

Another Gupta image of Kārtikeya, slightly later in date, comes from the district of Shahabad and is now in the Patna Museum. But for its peculiar bicornate head-dress, it bears a family likeness to the

well-known Kārtikeya image from the Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, Vārāṇasi, and is an impressive piece of sculpture, combining strength with calm determination, befitting the general of the divine hordes.

The Brāhmaṇical reliefs, dating from *c.* fifth century from Chandīmau near Giriak (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta) represent a different aesthetic and social tradition, with emphasis on narrative art. The scenes from the story of *Kirātārjuna*, viz., the penance of Arjuna, his grim duel with Kirāta and his final supplication to him, who is Śiva *incognito*, are portrayed with dramatic vigour and dynamism. Although lacking in elevated spiritual experience and sophistication, they form lively narrative groups of wide appeal and homely charm.

The numerous stucco sculptures of the Buddha and Bodhisattavas, dating from *c.* sixth century A.D. which embellish the facades of the fifth period temple of Stūpa Site III at Nālandā, are elegant products of the eastern idiom with a delicate and sensuous modelling. The figures express joyous repose and are represented in a variety of postures as meditating, preaching or offering gifts or protection.

By far the sublimest creation of the eastern idiom and a rare masterpiece of Gupta art is the colossal bronze Buddha of Sultanganj (Pl. XIV. Fig. 31) now in the Birmingham Museum. Standing in an attitude of protection, this Buddha image radiates divine assurance and compassionate grace as few images do. In combining sensuousness with spirituality and a tender smile with serenity of expression, this sculpture is indeed unique in Indian art and constitutes a monument to the artistic genius of ancient Bihar.

The creative momentum of the fifth and sixth centuries was not spent up immediately, and even during the seventh century, Bihar continued to produce creditable art-pieces in the classical eastern version as exemplified by the sculpture of the lady with a bird, from Rājmahal (Pl. XIV. Fig. 34), now in the Patna Museum. The refined elegance and poise, flowing outline and sensuous warmth of this figure are reminiscent of the Nāgī from Rajgir. The figures of Śiva and Pārvatī in marriage, as well as that of dancing Ganeśa, also represent art of a high order (Pl. XIV. Figs. 32, 33). But in Bihar, as in the rest of North India, a decline in the standards of art set in from the seventh century onwards. Gradually the creative vision came to be supplanted by formulæ. The form remained but the vitality diminished. The body conformed to the Gupta tradition, but assumed a dull heaviness. The modelling lost its suppleness and the outline its

fluidity, while the plastic surface became coarse. These tendencies were common in the late Gupta sculptures, produced in fair quantities at Nālandā and Benisāgar (Singhbhum district) and sparsely in the Gaya and Shahabad districts. The specimens from Benisāgar and the Shahabad district, as exhibited in the Patna Museum, are quite interesting iconographically, though they are squat and display a drowsy heaviness. The eighth-century sculptures from Nālandā, however, are lighter and more animated with a crisp modelling and firm outline, as illustrated by a few figures of Avalokiteśvara from the site.

Contemporary literature and travellers' accounts show that Bihar excelled the rest of the country in the number and grandeur of its temples, stūpas and monasteries with which this region was richly studded. According to the records of Fa-Hien and Yuan Chwang, who visited India in the early fifth and seventh centuries, places like Vaiśālī, Nālandā, Bodh Gaya, Rajgir and Patna each had hundreds of monuments, largely Buddhist and occasionally also Brāhmaṇical and of other sects, while numerous outlying centres were dotted with stray stūpas, shrines and monasteries. Yuan Chwang has left a vivid eye-witness account and goes into raptures when describing the palatial temples and edifices of Buddhist centres like Nālandā, some of which, according to him, were from 200 to 300 feet high and had from four to six storeys. 'The richly adorned towers and the fairy-like turrets resembling hill-tops, are congregated together. The observatories seem to be lost in the vapours and the upper rooms tower above the clouds.' Yuan Chwang also saw a bronze temple in course of construction and near it king Pūrṇavarman's copper image of the Buddha, more than 80 feet high, in a six-storeyed edifice. He refers in glowing terms to the monastic courts of Nālandā. 'All the outside courts, in which are the priests' chambers, are of four stages. The stages have dragon-projections and coloured caves, the pearl-red pillars carved and ornamented, the richly adorned balustrades, and the roofs covered with tiles that reflect the light in a thousand shades, these things add to the beauty of the scene.'

With the passage of time, most of these edifices have almost completely disintegrated, leaving mutilated ruins to bear witness to their past glory. Besides their dilapidated condition, another difficulty which confronts the student of art and archæology is that most of the Gupta structures were restored or rebuilt in successive ages and it is often quite a ticklish problem to distinguish the Gupta from the

post-Gupta modifications and accretions. Of the Gupta and late Gupta structures which must have been once quite numerous in Bihar, only a few can be definitely recognized. The earliest of these is the temple of Maṇi-nāga (now called Maṇiyār Math) at Rajgir, which was a Gupta temple of unique plan and design. It was a hollow cylindrical brick-structure with shallow projections at the four cardinal points and was decorated on the exterior with niches, containing stucco sculptures including the exquisite Nāgī figure. Rajgir has also preserved the remains of two late Gupta temples on Vaibhāra Hill, one, a Jaina temple, consisting of a small shrine in an open court enclosed by cells containing Jaina images in niches; and the other, a Mahādeva temple, of which only the sanctum and dilapidated pillared 'mandapa' have survived.

The highest and largest temple of Nālandā, Stūpa Site III (Pl.XII. Fig. 27), consists of a series of seven successive accumulations, of which the fifth dating from *c.* sixth century, was elaborately decorated with four corner-towers and facades with niches containing fine Buddhist stucco images. The temple was a solid rectangular structure and its sanctum was centrally built on a very high platform which was approached by a grand flight of steps with its parapet-walls embellished with majestic figures of lions. The temple was surrounded by numerous votive stūpas and a few subsidiary shrines, of which one with a gabled roof is noteworthy. Nālandā also had an interesting stone temple (Temple Site 2), originally dating from *c.* seventh century. It is rectangular with an elevated sanctum approached by a flight of steps and shows over 20 sculptured panels on its stone plinth (Pl. XII. Fig. 28), decorated with mouldings and carved cornices. The pilasters separating the panels are ornamented with vase-and-foliage designs, while the panels, framed in trefoil arches, represent gods and goddesses, Suparnas and Vidyādharas, scenes from domestic and everyday life, narrative reliefs from the *Rāmāyana* and story-books, and decorative patterns, rich in imagery. Scenes from the *Rāmāyana* showing Ahalyā, restored to life, offering homage to Rāma; and Rāvaṇa, with the multiple heads, threatening Sītā and reliefs representing the stories of the loquacious tortoise (*Kachchhapa Jātaka*) and of the ungrateful lion rescued by the kind-hearted rat are lively and full of human charm.

The brick-built Mahābodhi temple (Pl. XIII. Fig. 30) at Bodh Gaya which was originally constructed in the 1st or 2nd century A.D. (7th century A.D. according to some) is unfortunately encumbered

now with arbitrary restorations, the four corner-towers being a very late addition. The central tower, however, appears to be original in its essential plan and design including the repeated chaitya-arch decoration. The original structure, which was a magnificent conception, stood on a high plinth and had a lofty tower, pyramidal in elevation and square in section, the facade consisting of five vertical and seven horizontal bands, relieved by elegant pilasters and chaitya-arches. Some idea of the original design may be gleaned from an early clay model of the shrine recovered from Kumrahār at Patna.

The seventh-century stone temple of old Mandaleśvara, now called Mundeśwari (Pl. XIII. Fig. 29), standing on a hill at Ramgarh near Bhabua in Shahabad district, is indeed a gem of late Gupta temple-architecture. It is an octagonal shrine, measuring 40 feet in diameter, with its facade relieved by bold mouldings and niches, elaborately ornamented with pilasters having vase-and-foliage designs and chaitya-arch decorations. The door-jambs and lintels are carved with exquisite floral patterns and are further adorned at the base with sculptured images including those of Gangā and Yamunā, Śiva and Pārvatī, and so on. The temple has four entrances, including a blind one, and it originally had a pillared porch (mandapa) in front.

The stūpas dating from the Gupta and Late Gupta times are definitely of a cylindrical shape with a high base, usually consisting of more terraces than one. The cylindrical type is best represented by the existing brick stūpas at Giriak in the Patna district and Kesariya in the Champaran district.

Beautiful forms were produced in the Gupta and Late Gupta periods, even in the modest medium of clay, in the shape of toys and figurines, seals and sealings and pots which have been recovered from numerous sites in Bihar, of which Vaiśālī, Nālandā and Patna are prominent. The toys and figurines portray gods and goddesses, animals and birds, and male and female figures representing amorous couples, charming females and all types of people including the commoner and the aristocrat, the jester and the dancer, the dwarf and the groom, the acrobat and the foreigner. Particularly noteworthy are large terracotta plaques on religious and secular buildings which usually formed wall-decorations and showed figures, singly and in groups, representing religious, decorative and narrative themes. Examples of such plaques have been found in Kumrahār at Patna (already noticed above), Chausa (Shahabad district) and Belwa (Saran district). A relief from Chausa, now in the Patna

Museum, depicting a scene from the *Rāmāyana*, is interesting for its vivacity and simplicity of diction. Being the poor man's sculpture, terracotta figures are much more abundant than works in stone, bronze or stucco; and while some of them are as good as contemporary sculpture in elegance and refinement, the majority show greater freedom and liveliness and represent prevailing tastes and fashions, and the passing moods and fancies of their authors. On the whole, they are homely and popular works of art, displaying a sturdy vitality and high aesthetic sense. Similarly, some of the earthenware pots of this period (specimens available from Vaiśālī and Patna) were exquisitely decorated with a rich variety of stamped or incised designs, and combined utility with beauty, the hall-mark of the age.

Places like Hajipur, Vaiśālī, Patna and Bhabua in Bihar have yielded gold coins of the Imperial Guptas. The Gupta gold coins are known for their technical perfection and aesthetic elegance and compare well with the contemporary sculpture and painting in their refinement of modelling and in their assurance and delicacy of line. They form a veritable portrait-gallery for the study of beautiful male and female types, imbued with dignity and strong vitality.

Gupta seals, mainly made of clay and occasionally of other materials like bone, stone and metals, are of the same quality as the Imperial Gupta coins but on a limited scale. Large numbers of these have been recovered from the sites of Vaiśālī, Nālandā and Patna. These display beautiful lettering, skilled execution and a rich variety of designs and decorative patterns drawn from miscellaneous sources including mythology as well as the vegetable and animal kingdoms. Special note may be made here of two seals from Vaiśālī, portraying a front view of bulls, which speak of a highly trained observation and mastery in the handling of animal forms in perspective.

We have seen how beauty was worshipped in all its forms in the golden age of the Guptas and how it permeated all aspects of contemporary life, thought and culture. Like literature, art in this period attained a new height of dignity, lyrical beauty and maturity of expression which was neither equalled before nor afterwards. Both qualitatively and quantitatively, Bihar contributed magnificently to the evolution and efflorescence of Gupta art and architecture. Viewed from any angle, whether it be, originality, variety, merit or quantity, Bihar's contribution to the development of Gupta and Late Gupta art and architecture has been solid, substantial and highly significant.

X

HISTORY AND ADMINISTRATION

A.D. 750—1200

THE PĀLA DYNASTY

WITH the death of the king of Magadha and Gauḍa at the hands of Yaśovarman of Kanauj there followed a period of confusion caused by invasions from outside and misgovernment at home. When rulers failed, the people decided to act and they elected Gopāla their king. Gopāla was a native of Bengal. We do not know how he was elected or who were his electors. Gopāla restored peace in Bengal, terminated the period of anarchy and founded the Pāla dynasty. According to some authorities Gopāla belonged to the Śūdra caste (Dāsajīvinah) but we find the Pālas marrying into the Kshatriya Rāshṭrakūṭa and Kālachuri families. Later inscriptions mention them as Kshatriyas.

Gopāla, whose accession may be placed in *c.* 755, conquered Bihar. He founded the famous Odantpura Vihāra, the ancient site of the modern town of Biharsharif in Patna district. The construction of another monastery near Nālandā is attributed to him.

Gopāla was succeeded by his son Dharmapāla who made a bid for the sovereignty of the whole of North India and for the possession of Kanauj. In this attempt he came into conflict with the Rāshṭrakūṭas of the Deccan and the Gurjara Pratihāras of Mālwa and Rajputana. He first extended his influence to the Gangā-Jamunā doab but was defeated by the Gurjara Pratihāra king, Vatsarāja. But Dhruva, Rāshṭrakūṭa king of the Deccan, made a dash to the north; defeated both Vatsarāja and Dharmapāla and then retired to the south of the Vindhyas. Dharmapāla took advantage of his retreat and brought the kingdom of Kanauj under his control by placing his own protégé Chakrāyudha on the throne in place of Indrāyudha or Indrarāja. He held an imperial durbār and his

settlement of the kingdom of Kanauj was accepted by the numerous kings of North India such as the Bhoja, Matśya, Yadu, Avanti, Madra, Kuru, Yavana, Gāndhāra and Kīra kings, who now recognized Dharmapāla as their overlord. Thus the kings of Central India, the Punjab, Western U.P. (Delhi and Mathurā regions) and Sindh became his vassals. His sphere of influence is said to have extended to Kedārnātha in the north and Gangāsāgara in the east. He thus succeeded in making himself the paramount ruler of Northern India and is referred to as Uttarāpathaswāmi by a Gujerat poet of the 11th century A.D.

But this supreme position of Dharmapāla was challenged by the Gurjara Pratihāra king Nāgabhaṭṭa, who expelled Chakrāyudha from Kanauj and defeated Dharmapāla in a well-contested battle. Meanwhile Govinda III, the Rāshṭrakūṭa king, appeared on the scene with a large army. Dharmapāla and Chakrāyudha surrendered to him. Govinda III defeated Nāgabhaṭṭa II very severely and pursued him as far as the Himalayas. But affairs in the Deccan called Govinda III back, and thus the field was again left free for Dharmapāla, who appears to have re-established his authority over practically the whole of North India. The Khalimpur copper-plate inscription, dated the 32nd year of Dharmapāla's reign, speaks of him in glorious terms as ruling over an extensive and prosperous empire. The Monghyr copper-plate inscription of his son Devapāla clearly shows that the latter inherited the extensive empire intact and free from trouble. An inscription of the 26th year of the reign of Dharmapāla was discovered in a Bodh Gaya temple and a copper-plate inscription of his has been found at Nālandā. His reign came to an end in *c.* 718.

Dharmapāla was succeeded by his son Devapāla. His reign is the high-water mark of Pāla imperialism. He conquered Utkala (Orissa) and Prāgjyotisha (Kāmarūpa—Assam). In the course of his military campaign he is said to have reached Kāmboja. The Kāmbojas of ancient India are known to have been living in the north-west, but in this period they are known to have been in north-east India also and very probably it may mean Tibet. Thus Devapāla might have come into conflict with Tibet; there is nothing impossible in this because Tibetan sources claim that their kings Khri-Srong-Ida-Btsan and his son Mu-teg-Btsan-po subdued India and forced Dharmapāla to submit. Devapāla also may have clashed with them and defeated them. In the inscriptions, he is claimed to have subdued the

whole country from the Himalayas to the Vindhyas and from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea. He also came into conflict with the Drāviḍas of South India, who might have been the Rāshṭrakūṭas or the Pāndyas. The struggle with the Gurjara Pratihāras continued. Soon after the death of Nāgabhaṭṭa II, the weak king, Rāmabhadra, came to the throne and in his time Devapāla appears to have 'scattered the conceit' of the Gurjaras. But in the later years of his reign Devapāla had to face a younger and more resourceful enemy. Mihirabhoja, the son and successor of Rāmabhadra, who came to the throne of the Gurjara Pratihāras. Before 836, Mihirabhoja was master of Kanauj, the imperial city, and he proceeded to the east towards Devapāla's dominion. He claims to have defeated Devapāla, and the 'Goddess of Sovereignty' went over to Mihirabhoja, but the Pāla records say that 'Devapāla brought down the arrogance of the lord of the Gurjaras.' It is difficult to ascertain the facts in view of the conflicting claims of the rival parties; but it appears that Mihirabhoja had won some initial success which might have made him arrogant, but ultimately Devapāla held his own. The fact that he issued the Monghyr copper-plate from his camp at Mudgagiri adds weight to the opinion that he might have dug himself in here in preference to Pāṭaliputra in view of the Pratihāra offensive.

Devapāla ruled over an extensive empire and was well assisted by his cousin Jayapāla and a group of able ministers. His inscriptions have been found in Ghosrawan, Nālandā, and Hilsā, all in the Patna district and in Monghyr district. He was a Buddhist-Paramasaugata. The most celebrated event of his reign is the establishment of friendly and cultural relations with Bālaputradeva, king of Suvarṇadvīpa (Ceylon). The latter built a monastery at Nālandā, and at his request Devapāla granted five villages for its maintenance. The charter making the grant has been discovered in Nālandā and is a record of the greatest international significance, testifying to India's cultural contacts with the countries of south-east Asia. After a reign of forty years, Devapāla died about 858.

After Devapāla's death the Pāla empire appears to have passed through an internal crisis. We know of both Surapāla and Vigrahapāla claiming to be successors of Devapāla. Vigrahapāla was a son of Jayapāla (brother or cousin of Devapāla) and his succession meant a break in the direct line of Dharmapāla and Devapāla. Surapāla might have been a son or a grandson of Devapāla. Assisted by the able minister Kedār Miśra, whose father and grandfather

had served Dharmapāla and Devapāla, Surapāla made himself king of Magadha, where his inscriptions have been found. Vigrahapāla might have established his authority in (Aṅga) Bhagalpur, in East Bihar. That there was a temporary division of the Pāla empire into three units, viz., Aṅga, Magadha and Vaṅga, receives support from Rāshṭrakūṭa inscriptions. The Nilgund and Sirur grants of Amogha-Varsha dated 866, state that the rulers of Aṅga, Vaṅga, and Magadha paid homage to him. It appears that the death of Devapāla and the consequent temporary break-up of the political unity of the Pāla empire encouraged the Rāshṭrakūṭas to raid the north-eastern provinces some time before 866. We know that Surapāla was more interested in the performance of sacrifices than in wars, which might explain the disintegration of the Pāla empire. However, the period of crisis was short-lived and the reigns of Vigrahapāla I and Surapāla were over by 863.

Vigrahapāla I was succeeded by his able son Nārāyanapāla, in whose favour the father appears to have abdicated the throne. The marriage of Vigrahapāla I with Lajjā, the princess of the Haihaya family, may have helped in the consolidation of his family's position. Nārāyanapāla made himself master of the entire Pāla empire of Bihar and Bengal. From the find-spots of his inscriptions, it is clear that he ruled over at least East Bihar (Bhagalpur copper-plate in the 17th year), Gaya (temple inscriptions of the 7th year), South Bihar (Magadha) and North Bengal (Puṇḍravardhana: Bādal pillar inscriptions) and had retained Mudgagiri (Monghyr) as one of his fortified residences.

But some time after the 17th year of his reign, Nārāyanapāla had to yield sufficient ground to the Gurjara Pratihāra thrust. Mihirabhoja, after the death of Devapāla, made another attempt to extend his influence in the east, and from an inscription found in the Gorakhpur district, we learn that one of his feudatories of the Kālachuri family helped him in wresting sovereignty from the king of Gauḍa (Pāla king). The Kālachuri king Kokalla I also claims to have plundered the treasures of many kingdoms, including that of Vaṅga. This would have meant overrunning the territories of Bihar also. Mihirabhoja's victory over the 'Bṛihadvaṅgas' certainly suggests his success against the Pālas. This victory which may be placed in *c.* A.D. 881-82, may have again thrown the Pāla empire into confusion and disintegration. Kṛishṇa II, a Rāshṭrakūṭa king came to the throne in 880. His commands were obeyed by Aṅga, Kaliṅga,

Map V

EARLY MEDIEVAL INDIA

Gaṅgā and Magadha. It is very likely that Nārāyanapāla, beset with difficulties, may have sought peace and friendship with the Rāshṭrakūṭa king and married his own son Rājyapāla to the daughter of Rāshṭrakūṭa Tuṅgadeva, who has been generally identified with Jagatuṅga, the son of Kṛishṇa II. Some take him to be the Rāshṭrakūṭa Tuṅga Dharmāvaloka of Gaya.

However, Nārāyanapāla could not hold his own against the determined Pratihāra thrust and he lost Magadha and North Bengal to Mahendrapāla. Inscriptions of the 2nd, 4th and 6th year of Mahendrapāla's reign have been found in the town of Biharsharif and of his 9th and 10th year in Gaya. Another inscription belonging to the time of Mahendrapāla has been found in Itkhori in the district of Hazaribagh and an inscribed votive stūpa of his reign has been discovered in Nālandā monastery. An inscription belonging to the 5th year of his reign has been found at Pāhārpur, in Rājsāhī district in North Bengal. His hold over North Bihar is also proved by the discovery of the Dighwā-Dubauli plate found in the Saran district of Bihar. Thus the Pratihāra domination over Bihar was established and Nārāyanapāla was forced to rule over only a tiny part of his once extensive kingdom.

But after the death of Mahendrapāla in *c*. 910, the Pratihāra empire fell on evil days, and Nārāyanapāla recovered his lost kingdom of Magadha. A bronze inscription dated the 54th year of his reign has been found in the town of Biharsharif. This may be dated 917, very soon after Rāshṭrakūṭa Indra III's sack of Kanauj. It is possible that Nārāyanapāla may have been helped by his Rāshṭrakūṭa relations in the overthrow of Pratihāra suzerainty.

Nārāyanapāla was succeeded by his son Rājyapāla who ruled for at least thirty-two years. His inscriptions have been found in Bargāon (a village near Nālandā) and in Kurkihār (Gaya), which prove his rule over Bihar. His reign came to an end in *c*. 950. He was succeeded by Gopāla II, whose inscriptions have been found in Nālandā dated in the first year of his reign, another in Gaya, and the British Museum manuscript of *Ashṭa-Sāhasrika Prajnāpāramitā* dated the 15th year of his reign was written in the Vikramśilā-devavihāra. Thus Gopāla II ruled over Magadha and Aṅga. But he appears to have lost his hold on Bengal, the Chandra dynasty being master in East Bengal and the Kāmboja dynasty of the Pālas ruling over Northern and Western Bengal. The Chāndelas of Jejakabhukti, under Yaśovarman, claim to have raided numerous kingdoms, including

Mithilā (North Bihar) and Gaṅgā, which appear to have been cut away from the Pāla kingdom of Magadha. Yaśovarman's son, who came to the throne sometime before A.D. 954, claims to have imprisoned the queens of Rādhā and Aṅga. This shows that these were now different kingdoms; while Rādhā was under the Kāmboja Pāla dynasty, Aṅga was under Gopāla II or his son Vigrahapāla II. The Kālachuri king, Yuvarāja Ṭalso, raided Bengal this time. The Kālachuris also claim to have invaded Gauḍa and Vaṅgāla according to a palm-leaf manuscript *Maitreya Vaiyākaraṇa*, which was copied in the 57th year of Śrī Gopāladeva's reign; but some have read 11 or 17 years instead of 57. His reign may have come to an end in *c*. 970.

Gopāla II was succeeded by his son, Vigrahapāla II, who inherited a difficult situation and lived in troublesome times. In their reigns, Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II, besides Yaśovarman's attack, faced also the invasion of the Kālachuri king Lakshmaṇarāja. The entire paternal dominion of the Pālas in Bengal was lost to the Chandras and Kāmboja Pālas. In view of the long reign of Nārāyanapāla, Rājyapāla and Gopāla II and of Mahīpāla I (Vigrahapāla's son), Vigrahapāla II must have had a short reign. We ascribe him a reign of eight years.

After the death of Vigrahapāla II in 978, Mahīpāla I came to the throne. He recovered North and a part of East Bengal from his base in Aṅga and Magadha which he continued to rule. An inscription referring to the restoration of Nālandā in the 11th year of the reign of Parameśwara Mahārājādhirāja Parama-bhaṭṭāraka Mahīpāla has been found in Nālandā. The manuscript *Aṣṭa Sāhasrika Prajnā-pāramitā* was copied in Nālandā in the 6th year of his reign. An inscription on a bronze image dated in the 31st year has been discovered in Kurkihar in Gaya. An inscription of his reign on a large image has been found in the village of Tetrawan in Patna district. Mahīpāla also recovered Mithilā. Two identical image inscriptions were found at Imadpur and they are now in the British Museum. They are dated in the year 48 of Mahīpāla. Recently R. C. Majumdar has read the date as the year 148 and assigns it to the Nepali era beginning in 979-80. The use of the Nepali era in this cave however is not easy to explain. The discovery of so many manuscripts in Nepal may be explained by the migration of Buddhist scholars from Bihar to Nepal during the period of Muslim invasion of Bihar. There were certainly intimate cultural contacts between Nepal and Bihar but that does not mean that Nepal was a vassal of the Pāla king.

It is said that Mahīpāla recovered Mithilā during the later years of his reign. From a colophon of a manuscript of the *Kishkindhākāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* it appears that one Maharajadhiraja Gāṅgeyadeva Puṇyāvaloka Gauḍadhvaja was ruling over Tirabhukti in saṁvat 1076, which according to R. C. Mazumdar is the Śaka era and not Vikrama saṁvat. Therefore this Gāṅgeyadeva is the son of Nānyadeva.

However, Mahīpāla's rule over Tirhut in the 48th year is generally accepted. According to an inscription found at Sārnāth dated Vikrama Saṁvat 1083 (A.D. 1026) the repairs of many sacred structures in Sārnāth were carried out by Sthirapāla and Vasantapāla by the order of their brother Mahīpāla, king of Gauḍa. This would suggest that Mahīpāla was master of the Sārnāth region also. Mahīpāla suffered a defeat at the hands of the general of Rājendra Chola between the years A.D. 1021-23. The Chola invasion however, did not disturb the political set-up either in Bengal or Bihar.

Busy in restoring his lost paternal dominions and later in fighting the Cholas and Kālachuris, Mahīpāla had neither the time nor inclination to take part in the resistance to Mahmūd of Ghaznī's invasions of India. Mahīpāla had certainly succeeded in recovering much of the lost territory of the Pāla empire and this was not a mean achievement in the unsettled conditions of the time. After a reign of 52 years (according to Tārānātha) Mahīpāla died in about 1030.

Nayapāla succeeded Mahīpāla I. His rule over Magadha and Aṅga is proved by Tibetan sources. An inscribed image of Nayapāla has been found at Rayauna in south Monghyr and proves his rule over ancient Aṅga. But he had to face a powerful enemy. Gāṅgeyadeva Vikramāditya had come on the throne of Tripuri by A.D. 1030 and he is credited with extensive conquests. He made himself master of Prayāg, and before 1034 was in possession of Vārānasi when Niyaltagin, the general of the Jāminī king Māsud I, invaded it. It appears that soon after the passing away of the great Pāla king Mahīpāla I, Gāṅgeya seized the Banaras region (Sārnāth) from the Pāla dominion under Nayapāla. Gāṅgeya claims to have defeated the king of Aṅga, who was certainly Nayapāla. This is known also from Tibetan sources which inform us that Raja Karṇa, identified with the son of Gāṅgeyadeva, had invaded Aṅga and defeated Nayapāla, king of Magadha. Ultimately Dipaṁkarajnāna Atisa, the famous scholar of Vikramśilā-vihāra arranged peace between them. This event must have happened before Atisa left for Tibet,

and different dates ranging between 1038-42 are suggested for his departure to Tibet. As Gāṅgeyadeva was succeeded by Karṇa in the later part of 1041, it is reasonable to hold that Karṇa had led the invasion into Bihar during the reign of his father in A.D. 1037.

As Nayapāla was engaged in a life-and-death struggle against the Kālachuri Karṇa, his hold even in Magadha became loose and Śrī Śūdraka, son of Paritosha, became the virtual protector of Gaya by force of his own arms. In the inscription of his grandson Yakshapāla, Śūdraka is said to have defeated his enemies who fled into the forest. It is very plausible that Śūdraka may have taken some part in resisting the Kālachuris, and Nayapāla recognized, or was forced to recognize, Śūdraka as master of the Gaya region. But Śūdraka and his son Viśvarūpa recognized Nayapāla's suzerainty at least until the fifteenth year of his reign. It was either during the last years of his reign or in the early years of the reign of his successor, Vigrahapāla, that Jaṭāvarman, king of East Bengal, raided Aṅga.

Nayapāla was succeeded by his son Vigrahapāla III in c. A.D. 1045. Karṇa, who had succeeded Gāṅgeyadeva in 1041-42, was the most valiant and ambitious of the Kālachuri rulers of Tripuri. He did not feel bound by the treaty arranged by Atisa and made a dashing campaign against the Pālas. Among others, Vigrahapāla III, the king of Gauḍa waited upon Karṇa. But soon Vigrahapāla III got the better of Karṇa, defeated him, and married his daughter Yauvanaśrī. In his war against the Kālachuri Karṇa, Śūdraka's son, Śrī Viśvarūpa of Gaya, may have taken some active part, as the Akshyavaṭa Gaya inscription refers to his having destroyed all his enemies. The inscription is dated in the fifth year of the reign of Śrī Vigrahapāla. Gaya remained under Vigrahapāla's rule until the nineteenth year of his reign. An inscription on a stone image dated in the twelfth year of Vigrahapāla has been found in the Patna district. He ruled over North Bihar also. The Bangāon copper plate found in a village in Saharsa district proves that Tirabhukti was under him in the seventeenth year of his reign. The inscription found in Naulagarh, sixteen miles north of Begusarai, dated in the 24th year of the reign of Vigrahapāla, shows that a part of Monghyr district also (that is, ancient Aṅga) continued to form a part of Vigrahapāla III's kingdom. Thus practically the whole of Bihar (ancient Magadha, Aṅga and Tirabhukti), was under Vigrahapāla III. One of his residencies was Kānchanapurī, somewhere in Bihar. His rule over North Bengal (Puṇḍravardhana bhukti) is proved by the Amagāchi plate dated

in the thirteenth year of his reign. Vigrahapāla was thus a fairly powerful king and he issued silver coins with the legend 'Śrī Vigrahaer śrī Vi'. We have no other evidence of a Pāla king issuing coins in his own name. Vigrahapāla may be assigned a reign of twenty-six years on the strength of the *Pañcharakshā* manuscript in the British Museum. It is dated in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Vigrahapāla (who should be identified with Vigrahapāla III). So his reign may have come to an end in *c.* 1071. In his reign came the invasion of Chālukya Vikramāditya who claims to have defeated the kings of Gauḍa and Kāmarūpa. The Chālukya raids on North India are important because in their train came the Karṇāṭas who gave Bengal the Sena dynasty and North Bihar the Karṇāṭa dynasty of Nānyadeva.

Vigrahapāla III was succeeded by Mahīpāla II who, being suspicious of his brothers, imprisoned Surapāla and Rāmapāla. But Mahīpāla had to face a revolt of his feudatory chiefs, and ultimately the Kaivarta chief, Divya, and his nephew, Bhīma, defeated and killed him and became masters of Varendra (North Bengal). Surapāla and Rāmapāla escaped from prison; Surapāla came to the throne for a brief period, but was succeeded in *c.* 1075 by Rāmapāla who held Rādhā (West Bengal) and parts of Bihar. It is in this critical period of Pāla history (1071-75) that in Gaya the feudatory families of Śūdraka and Viśvarūpa began to claim independent status. Yakshapāla the son of Viśvarūpa was virtually an independent though petty local ruler. But Yakshapāla's glory appears soon to have been eclipsed. Another feudatory family in Magadha, viz., the Chikkora family had become powerful under Devarakshita, who is called both Magadhanātha and Pithipati. There is some controversy about the exact location of Pithi. Some scholars regard it as the region between Colgong and Sakrigalli junction on the Eastern Railway. But there appear to be weighty reasons for including certain areas near Gaya. Pithi may stand for Vajrāsana of Bodh Gaya. Aṅga was under the valiant Rāshṭrakūṭa chief Mahāna or Mahānadeva, who was Rāmapāla's maternal uncle. As the authority of the Pāla king became shaky, the feudatories began to quarrel among themselves. Mahānadeva of Aṅga defeated Devarakshita of Magadha, but ultimately peace was concluded and Mahānadeva married his daughter to Devarakshita.

The Gahaḍvālas in the meanwhile, had emerged as a great power in the upper Gangetic valley after the decline of the Kālachuris. The

rise of the Gahaḍvālas in the Kāśī region close to Gaya (Pithi) was certainly a danger to the kingdom of Pithi and Magadha, and therefore, Bhīmayaśas, who had succeeded Devarakshita fought and defeated the Gahaḍvālas. The king of the Gahaḍvālas was most probably Chandradeva (c. 1083-1103). There were other feudatory chiefs such as Surapāla, ruler of Kujavaṭi, about 14 miles north of Nayā Dumkā in the Santhal Parganas. North Bihar passed into the hands of Nānyadeva, a Karnāṭa who founded the Karnāṭa dynasty of Mithilā in 1097 after defeating the Gauḍa king, i.e., Rāmapāla. From then the unity of political history of Bihar is split into two, that of North Bihar (Tirabhukti or Tirahuti) and South Bihar (Magadha and Aṅga).

Rāmapāla could at the most claim only Rādhā (West Bengal) and a part of Bihar as being under him. Of course, the Tārā image inscription found in Tetrawan in the Biharsharif subdivision, dated in the third year of Rāmapāla's reign, shows that his authority was recognized in this part of Magadha. This also receives confirmation from the colophon of the manuscript of *Ashṭa-Sāhasrika Prajnāpāramitā* found in Nepal and now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Another manuscript in the Bengal Asiatic Society shows Rāmapāla's rule in Magadha in his 25th year. Another inscription, dated in the 42nd year of Rāmapāla's reign with his imperial titles, was found in the village of Chaṇḍīmau in the Biharsharif subdivision of the Patna district. However, Rāmapāla was not allowed peace even in his truncated dominion, and the Kaivarta chief Bhīma, nephew of Divya, was making incursions into Rādhā also. Thus Rāmapāla had to make some supreme effort to save his position, and in this he could count on the support of his maternal uncle Mahānadeva, king of Aṅga. Other local rulers of South Bihar also helped him. He was victorious in his war against his enemies and Bhīma, the Kaivarta chief, was captured and later executed. Rāmapāla built the city of Rāmāvati (in Maldah district at the confluence of the Karatoya and the Gangā) which became the new capital of the Pālas in Bengal. Rāmapāla to a large extent restored the fallen fortunes of the family, making himself sovereign of large parts of Bengal and South Bihar.

The reign of Rāmapāla proved to be the last flickering of a lamp before its final extinction. The restored Pāla empire soon broke up. Rāmapāla was succeeded by his brother Kumārapāla, who was soon followed by his son Gopāla III who, after a reign of at least fourteen

years, met a violent death, probably in battle against Vijayasena, and was succeeded in 1143-44 by his uncle Madanapāla. During the period (1120-1146) the Gahaḍvālas had succeeded in bringing parts of the Patna and Monghyr districts under their rule. We know from the Maner plate that in Vikram Samvat 1183 or A.D. 1126 the Gahaḍvāla king Govindachandra made a grant of the village of Padali in the Maniyara (Maner) paṭṭala to a Brāhmaṇa named Ganeśvaraswāmīn, and before 1146 he must have been master of Monghyr district, because in that year (1202 v.s.), while staying at Mudgagiri (Monghyr), he made the grant of a village to Thākur Śrīdhara on the occasion of Akshayatṛitīyā after taking a bath in the Gangā. While parts of the Patna and Monghyr districts were under the Gahaḍvālas, Aṅga was under Maṇḍalādhipati Chandradeva, grandson of Mahana, the uncle of Rāmapāla. This shows that Chandradeva was loyal to the Pāla dynasty and accepted the suzerainty of the Pāla king Madanapāla of whom he was a Maṇḍalādhipati. He is said to have helped Madanapāla in a crisis. But the forest tracts of the Gaya district, probably together with Hazaribagh district, had passed some time ago under a different ruling dynasty, that of the Mānas. The Govindpur stone inscription of the poet Gaṅgādhara dated Śaka 1059 (A.D. 1137-38) shows that at least in the Nawadah subdivision there ruled Magadheśvara Varṇamāna at whose court Daśaratha Gaṅgādhara's uncle was appointed a Pratihāra, while Gaṅgādhara himself became a minister of Varṇamāna's son Rudramāna, who was king at that time. We do not know anything definite about the Māna dynasty in Magadha. In a rock inscription of the 8th century A.D. found in Dudhpāṇi in Hazaribagh district, we are told that in the reign of Magadhādhirāja Ādisiṅha three brothers Udayamāna, Śrīdhannamāna and Ajitamāna, who were merchants, came to this region and were granted ownership of three villages by the king of Magadha. In our opinion, the Magadhādhirāja Ādisiṅha may be Ādityasena of the Later Gupta kings of Magadha. There is no evidence to show that the Māna kings of Magadha known from the Govindpur inscription were connected with the Māna brother of the Dudhpāṇi inscription; but their descendants may have continued as feudatory lords of the forest tracts, and by the end of the 11th century A.D., during the unsettled conditions after the death of Vigrahapāla III, may have emerged as ruling kings in these regions. It is also possible that Varṇamāna may have succeeded in making himself master of a part of

Magadha. Varṇamāna was succeeded by Rudramāna who was ruling in 1137-38.

THE SENAS AND GAHAḌVĀLAS

The Pālas were being squeezed out of Bengal by the Varmans and the Senas. Vijayasena had made himself master of southern and eastern Bengal and had defeated Madanapāla, king of Gauḍa. Another of Madanapāla's aggresive enemies might have been Gāṅgeyadeva, the king of Mithilā and son of Nānyadeva. Madanapāla appears to have maintained his hold over North Bengal till the eighth year of his reign, i.e. A.D. 1151-2, after which he was deprived of all his possessions in Bengal by Vijayasena. Madanapāla's rule was then confined to South Bihar. Even here Vijayasena might have tried to pursue him; he is said to have sent a fleet sailing along the west course of the Ganges, i.e. west of Rajmahal, probably directed against Madanapāla in Aṅga. Recently an inscription of the ninth year of the reign of Vallālasena in Sanokhar, a few miles away from Colgong in Bhagalpur district, has been found. This suggests that Vijayasena or his son and successor Vallālasena (1159-1179) had conquered a part of East Bihar from Madanapāla. We have already seen that the Gahaḍvāla king Govindachandra, was master of Patna and Monghyr districts before A.D. 1146. But the discovery of the Bihar hill-image inscription dated in the third year of Madanapāla and the Jayanagar (near Lakhisarai in Monghyr) image inscriptions, dated the eighteenth year of his reign, may prove that Madanapāla had recovered Patna and Monghyr districts from the Gahaḍvālas or that both Madanapāla and the Gahaḍvāla king, Govindachandra, might have been ruling over different parts of South Bihar. In this crisis, Madanapāla's feudatory chief (Mahāmāṇḍalika), Chandradeva of Aṅga, rendered him very valuable service, either in hurling back the Gahaḍvālas or by arranging peace between the Pāla and Gahaḍvāla kings. However, we know that Madanapāla was master of a part of the Monghyr district in 1161-62. An inscription of the same king, dated the eighteenth year of his reign and in Śaka Samvat 1083 (A.D. 1161-62) was found in Jaynagar village where an inscription of his fourteenth year was also found long ago. But in the same period in the Gaya region, we have to place Govindapāla, who ceased to reign in 1162.

The end of Madanapāla and Govindapāla appears to be fairly synchronous. The use of the word 'Vinashta-rājya' with reference to

Govindapāla's reign definitely suggests a violent overthrow, probably caused by the Senas or the Gahaḍvālas. Vijayasena, certainly after 1151-2, had deprived Madanapāla of his possessions in Bengal and he might have pursued him in Bihar also. He had already defeated Nānyadeva, the king of Mithilā, and made him his feudatory in 1101. Under Vallālasena (1159-79) the Senas may have put an end to Madanapāla's reign in Aṅga before 1166. Vallālasena might have advanced on Gaya and overthrown Govindapāla in 1162. Mention of the chaining of the lord of Gauḍa by Vallālasena in his *Ādibhūta-sāgara* may refer to Gauḍeśvara Govindapāla (who was actually the king of Magadha), or to Madanapāla. The violent overthrow of the Buddhist Govindapāla, probably a scion of the famous Buddhist dynasty of Pālas, by the Brāhmaṇical Sena ruler, left a deep but sorrowful impression on the people of Magadha. They regarded this event as the end of an epoch and began to reckon future events from that date, the date of the overthrow of Govindapāla. Lakshmaṇasena might have been the leader of the Sena army of invasion of South Bihar. It was probably because Lakshmaṇasena had virtually overthrown the Pāla dynasty in Magadha which had for so long assumed the title of the King of Gauḍa that he (Lakshmaṇasena) added 'Gauḍeśvara' to the imperial titles. But except for the clear evidence of Vallālasena's rule in East Bihar, there is no epigraphic evidence at all that the Senas conquered Magadha, i.e. Patna and Gaya districts.

The Gahaḍvālas under Vijayachandra and Jayachandra conquered Shahabad and Gaya districts, while they were already masters of large parts of Patna and Monghyr districts. An inscription dated in V.S. 1225 (A.D. 1169) discovered in the village of Tārāchaṇḍī, near Sasaram proves the suzerainty of Vijayachandra in this region for he granted villages to Brāhmaṇas. Japalādhipati Pratāpahavala was a Mahānāyaka (a feudatory official) of Kaṇyakubjādhipati Vijayachandra. Another inscription also dated 1169 has been found in Phulwāri (near Rohtāsgarh). This is a record of the Nāyaka Pratāpadhavala Vijyachandra's son Jayachandra, who continued to exercise the Gahaḍvālas' authority in Patna district before A.D. 1175 (Sihvār plate). He made a grant of two villages in Maniyara paṭṭala (Maner) to a learned Brāhmaṇa. That he was also master of the Gaya region is proved by the Bodh Gaya stone inscription (*c.* 1183-1192), which mentions Jayachandra, king of Kāśī.

Thus it is clear that the Gahaḍvālas had really succeeded to the

authority in South Bihar. This worried Lakshmaṇasena, who had succeeded to the throne in 1179. A war between the Gahaḍvālas and king Lakshmaṇasena was thus inevitable. In the inscriptions of his successors, Lakshmaṇasena is said to have planted pillars of victory in Allahabad and Kāśī. In his own inscriptions, he claims to have defeated the king of Kāśī. That he might have recovered Magadha and ruled over the territory may be suggested by the use in Magadha of an era beginning from the end of Lakshmaṇasena's reign. The fact that an era known as 'La-sam' or Lakshmaṇasena Samvat was singularly prevalent in North Bihar, alone goes a long way to strengthen the possibility that Lakshmaṇasena left some deep and intimate impression on Mithilā. But this is not enough to prove Lakshmaṇasena's, or as a matter of fact Sena, rule over Magadha or Mithilā.

When Bakhtīyār Khaljī invaded South Bihar in *c.* A.D. 1199-1200 the state was not in a position to offer stiff resistance. It appears that after reducing Odantpuri (Biharsharif) and the neighbouring region, his army proceeded eastward to Kiul, in the Jaynagar region, defeated Pālapāla and reduced the fort. There are extensive mounds in this area suggesting fort-like structures. This may have happened in *c.* 1200-1. We know that Nadia, in Bengal, fell about 1202-3. It was during this advance towards East Bihar that Muslim invaders came upon Vikramśilā and destroyed it.

It would be incorrect to think, however, that Khaljī's capture of Odantpuri (Biharsharif) meant the disappearance of all local rule in South Bihar. From the life-story of the Tibetan scholar Dharmaswāmī we know that in the years 1234-36, when he visited Magadha, Buddhasena was the king of this region and Vajrāsana (Gaya) was his residence or capital. Muslim armies from Biharsharif were raiding, plundering and breaking images in the neighbouring localities. One such raid on Nālandā and Gaya occurred in 1234 when Dharmaswāmī was there. The graphic picture that Dharmaswāmī gives shows the panic that reigned in Magadha which, according to him, included Gaya, Rājgṛiha and Nālandā. Thus it is clear that Buddhasena, king of Magadha, was not able to provide adequate protection to his people. His escape into the forest for fear of the Turks proves that he was not necessarily a vassal of the Muslim governor of Bihar. This Buddhasena belongs to the Chhiṇda dynasty and not to the dynasty of later Senas. He is referred to as Pithipati (king of Pithi, i.e. Magadha) in a Bodh Gaya inscription dated year 51 of 'Atīt-rājya' of Lakshmaṇasena. It is possible that Buddhasena

might have ruled down to the year 1270. He was succeeded by his son, king (bhūpati) Jayasena, who is referred to as 'Pithipati' in a Bodh Gaya inscription dated 1283-1285. Ancient Magadha, or at least a part of it, continued to be ruled by local Hindu rajas of the Buddhist faith up to 1285. It is a matter of significance that no positive evidence of Muslim rule in the Gaya region during the 13th century is available. But the conquest of this part of Magadha, though delayed, could not be put off for long.

North Bihar

The Karṇāṭa Dynasty

North Bihar, known as Tirabhukti or Mithilā, was a part of the Pāla empire, but in the confusion following the death of Vigrahapāla III the hold of the Pālas in North Bihar, as in South Bihar, became very loose. In the list of feudatories that helped Rāmapāla in his war against Bhīma, there is no mention of any ruler of Tirabhukti. It is rather a significant coincidence that near about the same time the Karṇāṭa Sena dynasty in East Bengal and Nānyadeva's dynasty in Mithilā came to power. Further west, in the Kāśī region, the Gahaḍvālas under Chandradeva rose to prominence. Some regard the Gahaḍvālas as a South Indian dynasty: they appear to be connected with the Rāshṭrakūṭas. The Karṇāṭas in Mithilā, the Senas in Bengal and the Gahaḍvālas in U.P., all three South Indian dynasties, came to power towards the end of the 11th century.

Nānyadeva founded the independent Karṇāṭa dynasty in Mithilā in 1097, with Simraon, in Champaran, as his capital. It was situated in an inaccessible place and was defended by high walls and seven ditches. This was observed by the Tibetan scholar Dharmaswāmī who visited Tirhut in 1234. Mullā Taqia, a contemporary of Akbar, also refers to the fortifications of Simraon. Nānyadeva fought the king of Gauḍa, who must have been Rāmapāla. About the same time Vijayasena attacked the kingdom of Rāmapāla. We do not know if Nānya and Vijayasena acted at first as collaborators against the Pāla king, but we know that in 1101 Vijayasena defeated Nānya and, according to Mullā Taqia, imprisoned him. It is possible that Nānyadeva may have temporarily accepted Sena overlordship. Nānyadeva, in his commentary on *Bhārata Nāṭyaśāstra*, refers to himself as Mahāsāmantādhipati together with Mithileśvara (king of Mithilā) and Nripamalla. This shows his feudatory status to some

overlord, probably to Vijayasena. However, Nānya lived long enough to consolidate his position and to conquer Nepal.

After a reign of about fifty years, Nānyadeva was succeeded by his son, Gaṅgādeva or Gāṅgeyadeva. Some place Malladeva, another son of Nānyadeva, before Gaṅgādeva. There is a great possibility that after Nānyadeva the Karṇāṭa dynasty was split up into two, one king ruling in Mithilā and the other in Nepal. Gaṅgādeva may be identified with Mahārājādhirājā Somavaṅśodbava Dharmāvaloka of Tirabhukti of the colophon of the *Rāmāyaṇa* dated 'Samvat' 1076. As first suggested by R. C. Majumdar, Gāṅgeyadeva of the colophon should be identified with Gāṅgeyadeva, son of Nānyadeva, and the date 1076 as of the Śaka era (and not Vikram Samvat). If Nānyadeva could be Pūṇyāvaloka, his son could be Dharmāvaloka.

So Gāṅgeyadeva assumed high imperial titles before 1154. He was succeeded by Narasiṁhadeva (1188-1227). During his time Muhammad Bakhtīyār Khaljī passed with his army through Tirhut on his way to Lakhnauti in 1202. The Rājā saved himself and his kingdom by agreeing to pay tribute. But Mithilā continued to be raided by Muslims. During the time of Rāmasiṁha, who came to the throne in 1227, Tirhut was again raided by the Muslims. Dharmaswāmī, the Tibetan scholar, says that elaborate defences were made in the city of Po-ta (the capital) and the Muslims could not reach the city. Vaiśālī was also in the grip of panic when the Tibetan scholar was there in 1234. However, Tirhut maintained its independent existence till the beginning of the 14th century.

Administration (750-1200)

The empire of the Pālas, at least till the reign of Mahīpāla I, was fairly extensive. They organized a stable administration which for a long time ensured peace over a large part of North India. The Pāla administration was largely based on the Gupta model.

We do not know definitely the capital of the Pāla empire. Some have suggested that the Pālas had no fixed capital and that they moved from camp to camp. This is hardly a satisfactory solution. From the manner in which Pāṭaliputra is referred to in the Khalimpur inscription of the Pāla king, Dharmapāla, it can be inferred that much of the glory and prosperity of the city had been revived in this period, though Yuan Chwang had seen it in ruins. Apart from its economic recovery as a port, its political importance is clearly suggested by the fact that the feudatory vassals are said to have greeted the

overlord in this city and their troops were assembled here. When the danger of the Gurjara Pratihāras became too pressing, Devapāla transferred his residence further east to Mudgagiri, which remained the royal residence in the time of Nārāyanapāla. It appears that Rāmapāla was the first king to decide to have a capital in Bengal and he established one at Rāmāvati, which remained the capital for some time. The Pālas were intimately connected with Bihar after the conquest of Bihar by Gopāla I and Dharmapāla. An overwhelming percentage of their inscriptions is found in Bihar and the dynasty continued in Bihar down to the end of the twelfth century A.D.

Though the Pālas ruled over large territories, they did not attempt the impossible task of administering the vast dominion directly. The conquered territories were left in charge of former rulers. As vassals they were expected to pay homage and contribute troops to the overlord and to attend the imperial durbar whenever held. One such was held by Dharmapāla in Pāṭaliputra. When the central authority of the Pālas became weak or the king-emperor happened to be incapable, the feudatories not only became *de facto* rulers of their territories but even defied imperial authority. In the reign of Rāmapāla, different parts of South Bihar were under *de facto* sovereigns, such as Mahānadeva of Aṅga, Devarakshita or Bhīmayaśas of Magadha, and other rulers of the forest tracts of the Santhal Pargana and Chotanagpur. The feudatories bore the titles Sāmanta, Mahāsāmanta, Rāṇaka, Maṇḍalādhipati and so on. There were Sādhanikarāṇaka and Maṇḍalika under Buddhasena of Magadha in the first half of the 13th century. Nāyaka or Mahānāyaka was also a feudatory title, as was Pratāpadhavala under king Vijayachandra Gahaḍvāla in Japala in modern Shahabad district. Chandradeva was 'maṇḍalādhipati' of Aṅga under Madanapāla.

The Pāla kings, in imitation of the imperial Guptas, assumed high titles like Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Maharajadhiraja, or Parameśvara. As the Guptas included Paramabhāgavata as a title to indicate their religious belief, so the Buddhist Pālas had 'Paramasaugata' as a title. Dharmapāla, who really set the dynasty on the road to imperial greatness, was the first Pāla king to assume these high-sounding titles. Even when the Pālas were reduced to the state of local rulers as was the case with Govindapāla or Pālapāla, they continued to use these titles.

For the successful administration of the dominion, the king was

assisted by his Yuvaraja. Rājyapāla was the Yuvaraja of Devapāla but appears to have predeceased him. Besides the Yuvaraja, the king was assisted by ministers who often held their position by hereditary right. The Brāhmaṇa family of Garga supplied a line of able ministers to generations of Pāla kings. But the influence and vested interest of a ministerial family were dangerous to imperial interests, especially when the emperor was a weak man. As an illustration, one Vaidyadeva, a minister, founded an independent kingdom in Kāmarūpa.

Various departments of the state were in the charge of a hierarchy of officers. The foreign office was under the Mahāsandhivigrahika, assisted by his junior minister or secretary. The affairs and ceremonies of the court were looked after by the Mahāpratihāra and his assistant the Pratihāra. A Brāhmaṇa, Manoratha by name, was appointed Pratihāra of Varṇamāna, king of Magadha. Aṅgarakshakas (bodyguards) looked after the king's personal safety. The Mahākshapātālika, assisted by an Akshapātālika, was in charge of the government record-office. The Judicial and Police departments were under daṇḍapāsikas, daṇḍikas and chauroddhanikas. The Chief Secretary, Pratham Kāyastha, assisted by karaṇikas (scribes) was the officer in charge of the secretariat.

The main sources of revenue were land and customs. Bhāga (the king's share of the produce), bhoga (periodical supplies of sundries to the king), a tax in cash levied on wealth in general, hiraṇya (tax in cash levied on certain special cash-crops) and uparikara (demand from temporary tenants) were important items of income from land. Customs duties on goods brought for sale, and ferry charges, were additional sources. During the Gahaḍvāla rule the subjects had to contribute Turushkadaṇḍa, probably a tax levied to pay off the Muslim raiders or to meet the cost of defending the country against them. There were many revenue officers. The Kshetrapāla was the surveyor-general and maintained the sanctity of boundaries. The Śashthādhikṛita collected one-sixth, the usual share of the king, from land. The Śaulkika was in charge of the collection of toll and customs duties. The Tārika collected ferry charges and forest dues.

Thus the Pālas maintained a large and graded civil service. The highest grade of officers were known as Rājāmātya, Kumārāmātya, Mahākumārāmātya and Rājasthāniyas. Departmental heads were known as Adhyakshas.

As the very stability and survival of the kingdom depended on

armed forces, the military department was well organized. The Pālas maintained a large army composed of elephants, cavalry, chariots, infantry and a fleet of boats. Boats capable of carrying 300 men were available. Among the main weapons of war were bows and arrows, swords, spears and so on. The king generally rode an elephant. Buddhasena, the king of Magadha, and Rāmsiṅgh, the king of Tirhut, were seen by the Tibetan scholar, Dharmaswāmī, riding an elephant. Skill in swordsmanship was considered a great asset. There were three such experts in the city of Tirhut. The army was divided into smaller units and officers such as Gaulmika-nāyaka, Daṇḍa-nāyaka were in charge of battalions. The Mahāsenāpati and Senāpati were in command in the field of battle but the Defence department was in the over-all charge of the Mahābalādhikṛita and Balādhikṛita. Some consider these officers to have been in charge of the infantry. There were Aśvapatis in charge of cavalry and Pilupatis in charge of the elephant division. The war-fleet was under the command of the Naukādhyaksha. The formation of battle arrays in the field, whether offensive or defensive, was a highly technical job, as was suggested by Kauṭilya long ago. The Mahāvyūhapati assisted by the Vyūhapati and other specialists appear to have been responsible for the formation of such arrays. For the purpose of defence there were forts, and capital cities were always well fortified. The Tibetan scholar refers to the fortifications of the city of Po-ta (Paṭṭala in Tirhut). It was surrounded by seven parallel walls and there were twenty-one ditches in front which were crossed by bridges. Archers were posted at each bridge. These precautions were necessary because of the imminence of the Turkish advance. The defences stood firm and the Muslims failed to reach the city. The forts were under Koṭṭapālas and the frontiers were guarded by Antapālas or Prāntapālas.

Bengal and Bihar were directly administered, and for convenience of administration they were divided into 'bhuktis'. We know of Śrīnagarabhukti and Tirabhukti in Bihar. They were probably under Uparikaras. The bhukti was subdivided into vishayas under bishayapatis. We know of Rājgṛiha, Magadha, Gaya and Kṛimila vishayas of Śrīnagarabhukti. Perhaps Pāṭaliputra was the headquarters of Śrīnagarabhukti. Gaya, Rājgṛiha and Kṛimila were cities or headquarters of the 'vishayas' of their name. If Magadha was a separate vishaya, Nālandā might have been its headquarters as it is known as Mahāpaṭṭala. The Patna division or Śrīnagarabhukti

comprised parts of Patna, Gaya, Monghyr and Bhagalpur districts. Kṛimila vishaya comprised the ancient territory of Aṅga but appears to have extended to Begusarai subdivision, as the Naulagarh region in Kṛimila vishaya. Kṛimila, the headquarters of this vishaya, may be located not far from Kiul, Lakhisarai in Mongyr district. The vishaya was subdivided into nayas. We have come to know that Ajapura was a naya within the Rājgṛiha vishaya; Pilipinachchha and Achala were nayas in the Gaya vishaya. The village was under a Grāmika but we also come across an officer such as the Daśagrāmika who, like the Gopa of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, was in charge of ten villages.

The king, though a Buddhist, was in duty bound to see that the socio-economic order based on Varṇāśramadharma was maintained. Pāla kings took an active part in religious and economic affairs. They not only founded numerous monasteries which developed into world centres of culture, but went into details of their administration. Devapāla appointed Vīradeva of Nagrahara as an abbot of Nālandā, while Nayapāla attended an assembly at Vikramśilā. Pāla kings also gave grants of land to Brāhmaṇas and temples. Buddhasena was a patron of the Nālandā monastery in the early half of the 13th century. The king set up market towns. There was a market (hāt) after the name of Devapāla in Nālandā. The State maintained large cattle farms, ranches and stables as in the Kauṭilyan state. We know of superintendents or adhyakshas of cows, camels, buffaloes, horses and so on. The government followed a secular policy and appointed Brāhmaṇas also as ministers or high officers. Employment was open to all the citizens of different parts of the country. Khasas, Hūṇas, Mālavas, Karṇāṭas, Lātas, besides the Gauḍas, were employed even in the army. The Pāla government did not follow a narrow sectarian and regional policy but was liberal and secular in outlook.

XI

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND CULTURE

A.D. 750—1200

A. Religion

HINDUISM

RELIGION has always been a vital force in the life and activity of the Indian people. The religions that mattered during the period were Hinduism and Buddhism, though Jainism also continued to have some influence. Hinduism commanded the allegiance of the largest section of the population, but it was a modified form of the ancient Vedic religion. This new Paurāṇic Hinduism had its roots in the earlier Vedic religion and pantheon. Great respect continued to be paid to Vedic studies, and to Brāhmaṇas well-versed in Vedic lore. The Bhagalpur grant of Nārāyanapāla refers to Gauravamiśra, who belonged to an immigrant family, as being well-versed in Vedic lore. Brāhmaṇa families from Madhyadeśa, believed to be the centre of the Vedic Brāhmaṇas, were heartily welcomed in North-Eastern India, i.e. Bihar and Bengal. The Monghyr plate of Devapāla records the grant of a village, Mesika, in the Kṛimila vishaya in the Srinagar (Pāṭaliputra) bhukti to a Brāhmaṇa named Vehekārta, belonging to the Aśvalāyana Śākhā of Vedic studies. From an inscription found in Bangāon in the Saharsa district, we learn of a grant of land made to a Brāhmaṇa 'brahmachāri' (student) of Narasiṁha, well-versed in Mīmāṁsā and belonging to the Chāndogya school. The inscription also refers to an immigrant Brāhmaṇa family from Kānyakubja. Images of Vedic deities, such as Vāyu and Agni, have been found. A stone image of Agni, bearded and with flames leaping from his body, is preserved in the Patna Museum. An image of Vāyu has been found among the ruins of temples of the

9th and 10th centuries in Benisāgar in the Singhbhum district of the Chotanagpur Division.

But there can hardly be any doubt that the worship of Paurāṇic deities was the vogue. Śaivism, Śāktism and Vaishṇavism were the principal Brāhmaṇical cults prevalent in the state of Bihar. The worship of Śiva in image and in Liṅga form was popular. Liṅga-worship was a very ancient cult, the origin of which can be traced back to the early Indus Valley civilization. Numerous seals, discovered in Vaiśālī and Nālandā and belonging to the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods, represent Śaiva symbols such as the serpent, the triśula (trident) and the bull. In the reign of king Dharmapāla, a Chaturmukha Liṅga was installed in the compound of the Bodh Gaya temple. Ruins of a Śiva temple, wherein a large Liṅga was installed, are to be seen on Vaibhāra Hill at Rajgir. In the reign of Nārāyanapāla, a village was granted to a Śiva temple in Kalasapota in Tirabhukti. In the reign of Vigrahapāla III, Śiva-liṅgas such as Vateśa and Prapitāmaheśwara were installed in temples at Gaya. Besides being worshipped in the Liṅga form, Śiva was also worshipped in human form with his spouse Umā or Pārvatī. Numerous images of Umā-Maheśwara, belonging to this period, have been found in different parts of Bihar. Śiva and Pārvatī are seen sitting in an amorous pose. Some images depict the marriage scene of the divine couple. Śiva and Umā are seen standing. The lord with obvious shyness holds the hand of his spouse who is looking coyly at a mirror. Brahmā is acting as the priest, and their joy is depicted by figures on the pedestal, dancing and playing on musical instruments. Separate images of Pārvatī, though rare, have also been found. One such image in bronze belonging to the reign of Nārāyanapāla was found in the town of Bihar.

There existed a heretical sect of Śaivism known as the Pāśupata sect, founded by Lakulīśa in the early centuries of the Christian era. The sect had adherents in Bihar also. The Bhagalpur plate of Nārāyanapāla refers to this Pāśupata sect. An image of Lakulīśa has also been found among the ruins of the early medieval temple at Benisāgar in the Singhbhum district.

Probably as a result of the influence of Orissa, there were set up in the Chotanagpur region, eight Śiva-liṅgas together in eight associated shrines, known as Aśta-Śambhus. Such shrines probably existed in Benisāgar, but they still stand at Khekparta in the Lohardaga region and at Añjan in the Gumla subdivision, both in Ranchi

district. Worship of Ganeśa and Kārtikeya was associated with that of Śiva, as they were regarded as his sons. Numerous images of Ganeśa, four-handed, six-handed, and eight-handed, sitting, standing and dancing, have been discovered in various parts of Bihar, generally as Pārśvadevatās (side deities) in Śaiva shrines. Many images of Ganeśa have also been preserved in the Patna Museum. Images of the sitting and standing Ganeśa have been found in Benisāgar in Singhbhum district. Sculptures of Kārtikeya depicting him with his *vāhana* (vehicle) of a peacock have been found both in north and south Bihar. A unique image of the Śakti of Kārtikeya is preserved in the Patna Museum. All this evidence clearly points to the immense popularity of Śaivism in Bihar. This is also indirectly attested to by the Tibetan scholar Dharmaswāmī who visited Bihar in 1232-34. He says that with a view to protect the Buddha's image from attack by non-Buddhists, the monks at Vajrāsana (Bodh Gaya) put an image of Śiva in front of it, to hide the Buddha's image. We have epigraphic evidence to show that the birthday of Śiva was celebrated in Bihar.

Intimately associated with the Śaiva cult was the cult of the Mother-goddess known as Durgā or Umā, consort of Śiva. Numerous images of Mahiśamardini have been discovered in Bihar depicting Durgā killing the buffalo-headed demon. Worship of the Sapta-mātṛikas (seven mothers) was common. The consorts of seven gods, they are identified by the characteristic *vāhanas* of their respective lords. Another aspect of the Mother-goddess cult was the worship of a female deity with a child in her lap. Numerous such images have been discovered in South Bihar. Some are inscribed showing the prevalence of the cult in the Pāla period.

The worship of Vishṇu and his many incarnations was equally popular. Numerous images, belonging to the Pāla and Sena periods and depicting Vishṇu in the forms of Vāsudeva, Govind and Varāha, have been discovered in different parts of north and south Bihar. Many of them are preserved in the Patna Museum. Vishṇu is generally depicted as being four-handed and wielding a discus, a club, a conch and a lotus. He has the sacred thread about his body, the *srivatsa* symbol on his chest and the long *mukuta* (crown) on his head. He has a *vanamāla* and other ornaments on his body. He is often shown with Lakshmī, or Sarasvatī or Bhūdevi. His *vāhana*, Garuḍa, is also often depicted. An inscription, belonging to the 7th year of Nārāyaṇapāla's reign and found in the courtyard of the

Vishṇupāda temple at Gaya, begins with an invocation to Purushottama (Vishṇu) in the form of Nṛisiṁha. An image of Garuḍa surmounted a stone monolith at Bhagalpur in the time of Nārāyaṇapāla. An inscription was discovered at Rāmgaya, incised on a pedestal which had representations of the incarnations of Vishṇu. On one of the slabs representing the ten incarnations of Vishṇu in the temple of Konch in the Gaya district, the 9th incarnation, the Buddha does not appear. Possibly to the knowledge of the artist, the Buddha had not yet been incorporated into the ten incarnations at that time. The worship of Lakshmī has always been an integral part of the Vaishṇava cult. Lakshmī is often represented along with the images of Vishṇu. An image of the Anantaśāyi Vishṇu is found in the courtyard of the Vishṇupāda temple of Gaya, in which Vishṇu is seen resting his feet on the lap of Lakshmī. Bronze images of Balarāma or Haldhara, the 7th incarnation of Vishṇu according to some, have been discovered in Kurkihar. In the reign of Nayapāla, a Brāhmaṇa named Viśvāditya erected a temple of Vishṇu in Gaya. Another temple of Gadādhar (Vishṇu) was also built in the city during the reign of the same king. Below the courtyard of the Vishṇupāda temple of Gaya is an inscription invoking Vāsudeva, which belongs to the reign of Govindapāla who flourished in the latter half of the 12th century.

Among the minor Brāhmaṇical cults the worship of the Sun and the Nāgas was quite prevalent. Numerous Sun images have been found in north and south Bihar. The Sun-god is shown standing, wearing knee-high boots and holding a lotus in both hands. He is generally accompanied by Ushā and Pratushā, Daṅdi and Piṅgala. On the pedestal is the charioteer, Aruna, the seven horses and the one-wheeled chariot. An inscription of Yakshapāla, a local king of Gaya, begins with an invocation to the Sun-god. The worship of the Nāgas continued during this period in Bihar. The Gangā and Yamunā rivers came to be deified females. Their images are found in Bihar. In Benisāgar in the Singhbhum district, images of Gangā and Yamunā as pārśvadevis (side deities) are found. During the reign of the Brāhmaṇical Gahaḍvālas and the Senas, Hinduism received added impetus.

Dharmaswāmī, who visited Bihar in the early part of the 13th century, says that Brāhmaṇical worshippers were in a great majority in Bihar, while Buddhists were in a minority. He mentions that out of eighty Buddhist monasteries only two were in a serviceable condition at

the time of his visit. He also refers to the religious sacrifices performed by non-Buddhists in which numerous animals were slaughtered. In Magadha, he saw a sacrifice of 300 buffaloes together with 300 loads of unhusked rice. The sacrifice was offered in the name of the Tāntrik Mother-goddess, while circular or square or triangular *mandalas* or *chakras* were being made in the embers of the sacrificial fire. Among the other religious ceremonies observed during the period, the birthday of Śiva, the bath in the Gangā and the Visuvat Sankrānti may be noted. Akshaya-tritīyā was also observed as a holy day.

NYĀYA AND MĪMĀṀSĀ PHILOSOPHIES: NYĀYA

After having briefly surveyed the popular aspects of Hinduism in Bihar, it is necessary to see what Bihar, especially Mithilā, contributed to the intellectual and philosophical aspects of Hinduism during this period.

The land of Mithilā proved most fertile to the two systems of thought, which took root there. These were the Nyāya and the Mīmāṁsā philosophies. It is noteworthy that the father of the old Nyāya (viz. Gautama) as well as the father of the new Nyāya (viz. Gangeśa) were sons of Bihar. Probably no single province of India has produced as many Naiyāyikas and Nyāya works as this state. Similarly, it can be said that all the three schools of Mīmāṁsā philosophy, of Kumārila, Prabhākara and Murāri Miśra, virtually grew up and flourished in Bihar. An important cause for the development of the Nyāya and Mīmāṁsā philosophies here might be that Mithilā was under obligation to protect orthodox culture from the onslaught of all heterodox schools of thought including Jainism and Buddhism. This explains the rise of great Mīmāṁsakas and Naiyāyikas between A.D. 700 and 1000.

If early Bihar is proud of the illustrious trio, Janaka, Yājnavalkya and Gautama, this period (between the 8th and 10th centuries) can boast of three brilliant jewels: Maṅdana (8th century), Vāchaspati (9th century), and Udayana (10th century), names which have become immortal in the history of Indian thought and philosophy.

The rise and growth of Nyāya philosophy in this land is a long story spread over about two thousand years. The important philosophers after Gautama, were Vātsyāyana who wrote his *Bhāshya*

(commentary) on *Nyāya Sutra*, and Udyotakara who wrote his *Vārtika* (sub-commentary) on the *Bhāshya*. These works have become classics of ancient Nyāya literature. The next thinker was Vāchaspati Miśra, who elaborated the conceptions of the *Vārtika* and defended them against heterodox and Buddhist criticism.

Vāchaspati Miśra is said to have belonged to a village (called Thāḍhī) in the Darbhanga district. The date that he has given to one of his works (viz. *Nyāya Sūchi Nibandha*) is 898, which (if taken to be in the Samvat era) corresponds to A.D. 841. This places him in the ninth century.

Vāchaspati Miśra was the master of all the six systems of philosophy. He was therefore called 'Shad-darśanavallabha' or 'Sarvatantra-Svatantra'. His learned exposition of the *Nyāya Vārtika* (also called *Nyāya-vartika-tātparya-tikā*) earned him the title of 'Tātparyāchārya' (the great expositor). In this important work he has tried to defend Udyotakara against the charges of Dignāgāchārya. His commentary on *Śaṅkara Bhāshya* occupies a very high position in the gallery of Vedantic works. It was named *Bhāmati Tīkā* to commemorate his wife, Bhāmati, who happened to be childless. His commentary on Isvarakṛishṇa's *Sāṅkhya Kārikā* (work on Sāṅkhya philosophy) is called *Sāṅkhya-tattva-kaumudi*. It is regarded as an authoritative work in the field of Sāṅkhya literature. He also wrote commentaries on Maṅdana Miśra's *Vidhi-viveka* and *Brahma-siddhi* (also known as *Nyāya kaṇīka* and *Brahma-tattva-samīkshā* respectively).

About a century after Vāchaspati Miśra, we come across Udayanāchārya, another great thinker in the history of Nyāya philosophy, who championed its cause and defended it vigorously against the attacks of Buddhist logicians.

Udayana was born in a village called Kariyan, 12 miles south-east of Darbhanga. His age is inferred from the date of his *Lakshaṇāvali* which is given as 906 (Śāka Year) corresponding to A.D. 984. The main works of Udayana are:—

(*i*) *Tātparya-pariśuddhi*; (*ii*) *Ātma-tattva-viveka*: in this work, he tries to establish the existence of Ātman (Soul) by refuting the Anātmavāda (no-Soul theory) of the Buddhists; (*iii*) *Nyāya Kusumāñjali* (a classical work which tries to prove the existence of God); (*iv*) *Kiraṇāvali*; (*v*) *Lakshaṇāvali*; and (*vi*) *Nyāya Pariśishta*.

Udayanāchārya was a very able exponent of theism. There is an interesting anecdote concerning him. While he left no stone unturned in his striving to support God, God did not prove to be equally kind

to him! One day while in acute distress, he addressed God in the following manner:

Aiśvarya-mada-mattosi mamāvajnaya vartase
Upasthiteshu Bauddheshu mamādhīnā tava sthitih.

'O God, you have become intoxicated with power and so you disregard me! But remember that if my existence depends on You Your existence also depends upon me when you are assailed by Buddhists.'

It is interesting to note the long history of polemics between the Naiyāyikas and Buddhist logicians. Gautama's *Nyāya Sūtra* was criticized by Buddhist logicians like Nāgārjuna, but they were refuted by Vātsyāyana (in his *Nyāya Bhāshya*). Vātsyāyana was attacked by Buddhists like Dignāgācharya, who in turn was assailed by Udyotakara in his *Nyāya Vārtika*. Again, Udyotakara was attacked by logicians such as Dharmakirti. They were answered by Vāchaspati Miśra in his *Nyāya-vārtika-tātparya-tikā*. Vāchaspati again was countered by a host of Buddhist logicians, who in turn were refuted by Udayanāchārya. This series of attacks and counter-attacks finally came to an end after about the 10th century.

MĪMĀṀSĀ

The rise and growth of Mīmāṁsā (laws and regulations regarding rituals and karma) in Bihar is another interesting story. During the 8th century, Mīmāṁsā philosophy was at its height in Mithilā. It was during this period that Kumārila Bhaṭṭa came on the scene to re-establish the supremacy of Karmakāṇḍa by vigorously defending it against Buddhist opposition. In his three monumental works *Śloka Vārtika*, *Tantra Vārtika* and *Tuptīkā*, he has strongly supported the Mīmāṁsā views elaborated in the *Śabara Bhāshya* on *Jaiminiya Sūtra*.

There is reason to believe that Kumārila was a native of Mithilā for Ānandagiri in his *Śaṅkara Digvijaya* refers to Maṅdana Miśra as the '*bhaginīpati*' (sister's husband) of Kumārila. Some believe that he lived in the village of Bhattapura in the Darbhanga district.

Maṅdana Miśra like his preceptor, Kumārila, was a staunch supporter of Vedic Karmakānda (system of rituals). He has rendered great service to Mīmāṁsā literature by his valuable contributions: (*i*) *Vidhi-viveka* (a treatise on Vedic injunctions); (*ii*) *Bhāvanā-viveka* (a treatise on meanings); (*iii*) *Vibhrama-viveka* (a treatise on errors) and (*iv*) *Mīmāṁsā-sūtrānukramāni* (a versified summary of *Mīmāṁsā Sūtras*).

The fame of Maṅdana Miśra as a great Mīmāṁsaka attracted the attention of Ādi Śaṅkarāchārya, who travelled a long distance to reach the former's house in the village of Māhishmati (now called Māhiśi, in the Saharsa district). The discussion that took place between the two intellectual giants has become a classic. It has come down to us through the *Śaṅkara Digvijaya* which pays eloquent tribute to the high intellectual standard of Mithilā.

The champions of two very important schools of thought (Mīmāṁsā and Vedānta) discussed incessantly, not for days but for months. In this historic Śāstrārtha (discussion on Śāstras), the role of the judge was played by Sarasvatī, the talented wife of Maṅdana Miśra, who ultimately gave the verdict in favour of the monistic Vedānta of Śaṅkara.

Sarasvatī however did not allow Śaṅkara an easy victory. After her husband had retired, she herself stepped into the debating arena and cornered Śaṅkara, a confirmed celibate, when dealing with Kāmaśāstra, the science and art of love, so that he had to yield and beg for time for further study!

After joining up with Śaṅkara, Maṅdana wrote such famous, scholarly works as *Brahma-siddhi* and *Sphota-siddhi*.

Being a senior contemporary of Śaṅkara (A.D. 788-820), Maṅdana Miśra must have been born in the 8th century, and might have lived until the middle of the 9th century.

Prabhākara, the propounder of the Guru school of Mīmāṁsā is said to have been a classmate of Maṅdana Miśra. The story goes that one day Prabhākara, while still a student, gave a novel interpretation which so pleased the teacher (Kumārila) that he (Prabhākara) was nicknamed Guru. Prabhākara wrote two learned commentaries on *Śabara Bhāsyha*, *Bṛihati Tīkā* (the bigger commentary) and *Laghvī Tīkā* (the smaller commentary). He made a marked departure from the tradition of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa. His views were further expounded by Śālikānāth Miśra, a devoted follower of the Guru school.

Murāri Miśra is said to have started a third school of Mīmāṁsā. But little is known about him except the common saying which is still in vogue in Mithilā: Murārestritiyah Paṅthāh, Murāri follows a third path of his own.

The Mīmāṁsā tradition was kept alive for many centuries by a long line of scholars in Mithilā. It is said that for a sacrifice performed by Queen Viśwasa Devi of Mithilā, invitations were sent to as many as fourteen hundred Mīmāṁsakas!

JAINISM

Jainism does not appear to have been a living force in Bihar during this period. Some Jaina images are found especially in south Bihar, in Rajgir and in the Hazaribagh district. Reference to a Jaina temple near Nālandā has been made in findings near Nālandā. The temple belongs to the Pāla period. Ruins of another Jaina temple on Vaibhāra Hill in Rajgir have already been noted.

BUDDHISM

The long rule of the pro-Buddhist Pāla kings gave a fresh impetus to declining Buddhism. But it was the Tāṅtrik form which became prevalent in the State. The theory of Yogāchāra and Vijnānavāda, largely developed in Nālandā, caused revolutionary changes in Buddhism, leading to an expansion of the Buddhist pantheon, in which female deities as 'principles of energy', personifying Prajnā, became predominant. The doctrine of Karuṇā (compassion) was added to the principle of Mahāsukhavāda, and deities were expected to show compassion for devotees and contribute to their material and spiritual welfare. They were also invoked to destroy evil spirits. These Tāṅtrik deities were invoked in deep meditation and were worshipped in the manner specified by mantras or dhyanas. The importance of the mantras and the tantras increased. Śunya was regarded as Nairātma (non-self) with which the Bodhichitta was *in complete unison and thus experienced the eternal and the highest* bliss—*Mahāsukha. Āunya emphasized the feminine aspect of the* Highest Principle. It also encouraged esoteric ideas and images in sensuous and even sexual poses. This was Vajrayāna. Vajra was defined as Prajnā and is synonymous with Śakti. The original simple religion thus developed mystic rites and rituals. The common people were lost in a repetition of mantras and spells, the worship of strange images, and belief in the mysterious powers of gods and goddesses. Nālandā and Vikramśilā were the greatest centres of Tāṅtrikism. Kamalaśilā, Santarakshita and Padmasambhāva of Nālandā University, together with Siṁhabhadra, Jetari, Ratnākaraśānti, and Dipaṁkara Srijnāna Atisa were great professors of Taṅtra in Bihar who even went to Tibet and other foreign lands for religious propaganda. The Nālandā copper plate of Devapāla refers to Nālandā as the abode of Bhikshus and Bodhisatvas well-versed in Tantra. Different forms of Tara, Prajnāpāramitā, Bhṛikuti Vajraśārada, Parṇasāvari, Vajravarṇi, Vāgīśvari, were worshipped and their

images have been found both in north and south Bihar. Nālandā and Kurkihār have yielded the largest single finds of the Tāṅtrik pantheon. The Nālandā copper plate of Devapāla proves the existence of religious and cultural contacts between Bihar and Indonesia. Balaputradeva, king of Yavadvipa (Java) sought and obtained a grant of five villages in Magadha for the support of the Buddhist monastery built at Nālandā by the Indonesian king. Vīradeva, a resident of Afghanistan (Nagrahāra or modern Jalalabad), was a learned Buddhist scholar who came to Magadha. He was at first in the Yaśovarmapura Vihāra (Ghosrawan in the Bihar subdivision) and later was appointed chief abbot of Nālandā by Devapāla.

The Pāla kings built numerous Buddhist monasteries, and made gifts to them and to Buddhist deities. Copper plates of Devapāla and Dharmapāla have been found at Nālandā. Numerous votive images and stūpas were dedicated in the reign of the Pāla kings such as Śurapāla, Mahīpāla and others. The University of Nālandā continued to attract Tibetan scholars. Dharmaswāmī (early 13th century) refers to earlier Tibetan visitors at the University. In his time, old Rāhula Śrībhadra was the chief abbot who had 70 students under him even when Bihar (Odantpuri Vihāra) was under the Turks. Dharmaswāmī says that Buddhasena, the king of Magadha, was a patron of the University while rich men like Jayasena also helped the University even in those very difficult days.

Dharmaswāmī writes that he witnessed raids by Turks on Odantpuri. It was still so famous that the Buddhist monastery of Sam-ye was constructed on that model at the instance of Śāntarakshita who had gone to Tibet on invitation. Another important Buddhist monastery, Vikramśilā, soon developed into an international centre for the diffusion of Tāṅtrik Buddhism and Indian culture in general. Tibetan scholars frequented this university, where there was a Tibetan house. Atisa, the renowned professor of Vikramśilā, went to Tibet on a pressing invitation from the king of Tibet in A.D. 1041. This monastery too, was completely destroyed by Muslims and Dharmaswāmī says that its stones were thrown into the Gangā. Tilādhaka and Yaśovarmapura were other monasteries in Magadha.

Towards the end of the Pāla period, a new development was noticed in Buddhism in Bihar and Bengal. The Tāṅtrik religious practices, including the difficult yogic sadhanas, had become very complicated, with the result that the need for the guru to initiate the devotees into such mantras, dharanas or dhyanas was felt. These gurus were

considered spiritual people who had not only realized the Śunya, but were also capable of leading their own devotees to that stage. In course of time many Siddhas or gurus arose who preached their religious doctrines to the common people. The religion preached by these Siddhas was known as the Sahajiyā sect of Buddhism. Many of these Siddhas were associated with Nālandā and Vikramśilā, some of whose learned scholars developed this aspect of Buddhism. The Siddhas preached in the language of the people. Sarahapa, Kanhapa, Naropa, Dombipa and Bhusupa were some of the prominent among them. They preached absolute merger, or rather complete identification, with the Śunya. They ridiculed the worship of images and the efficacy of religious baths and pilgrimages to sacred places. They preached that the Ultimate Reality or the Buddha was not to be sought in distant places or in places of pilgrimage. The Buddha resided in man himself, and to realize Him within oneself was what was needed. To seek Him by other means outside oneself was like trying to see the bracelet on one's own wrist in the mirror, as one Siddha pithily pointed out. The Sādhaka, who believed in self-realization through a guru's help, had no love or respect for scholastic discussion or learned discourse because those things would not bring salvation any the nearer. The grace of the guru and the practice of prescribed yogic exercises of hathayoga or dhyanas or karmamudra, including mahāmudra, would lead the individual to the realization and the experience of eternal joy. To express these high philosophical truths in the language of the masses, the Siddhas used sexual symbolisms. It was believed that the consummation of the sexual act gave to both parties the highest degree of pleasure and satisfaction and demanded for a time absolute concentration and complete merger with the beloved. The Siddhas preached that a similar but everlasting pleasure and satisfaction, a beatitude without dependence on anything external, would be realized when the devotee identifies himself with Prajnā, which unites him with the Śunya. But however good the intentions and however logical the rationalization, the practice caused self-deception and led to corrupt and immoral behaviour, which was responsible for widespread demoralization.

Buddhism thus began to decline fast, the process having begun with the abuse of Vajrayāna and Sahajiyā. The Muslim invasions of A.D. 1199-1200 gave a great shock to the already declining religion. The destruction of Buddhist monasteries disintegrated the brotherhood of monks and struck a mortal blow at that religion.

RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

During this period there flourished in Bihar, side by side, many religions, sects and sub-sects. This shows that religious toleration was practised by kings and people alike. The Pāla kings were Buddhists but in their time numerous Hindu temples were constructed and images of various deities were installed. During the reign of the Senas and Gahaḍvālas, who were Hindus by faith, Buddhist monasteries and images continued to exist as before. The Tibetan scholar, Dharmaswāmī (13th century), saw numerous Buddhist monks, monasteries, and images in Rajgir, Vaiśālī, Nālandā and Gaya. However, there are some Buddhist images which insult Hindu deities. A large though broken image of Trailokyavijaya trampling on Śiva and Pārvatī is found in Nālandā. In the Patna Museum, there is an image of the Buddhist goddess Aparājitā slapping Ganeśa. Dharmaswāmī also refers to the danger from non-Buddhists to Buddha's image which was averted by putting an image of Śiva in front. When Atisa was leaving for Tibet, non-Buddhists who did not relish the progress of Buddhism tried to put obstacles in his way. These instances show that some misguided sections on both sides often took to undesirable action and demonstration. But these aberrations did not vitiate the general picture of religious peace and tranquillity that prevailed. Religious understanding and mutual give and take went as far as the incorporation of the deities of one another's religion into their own pantheons. Sapta-mātrika is common to both Hinduism and Buddhism. Vishṇu's features, Sūrya and Śiva appear to have been transformed into Buddhism as Avalokiteśwara, Marīchi and Nilakaṇtha respectively. Some of Durgā's characteristics can be found in the Buddhist Tārā. The Hindus went so far as to adopt the Buddha as one of the incarnations of Vishṇu and he is represented as such in many sculptures in Bihar of the Pāla and Sena periods. Among the different Hindu cults, also, we find syncretic ideas developing. An image found in Bihar shows Harihara (representing the syncreticism of the Vaishṇava and Śaiva cults) in the centre with Sūrya and the Buddha on either side. Another image of Bhṛikuti has Ganeśa and Indra standing on either side. Again, numerous Hindu images have been found in Nālandā, Kurkihār and other Buddhist sites. The remains of a thoroughly Brāhmaṇical temple in the Nālandā monastery prove the religious understanding that prevailed in the State. In a Chaturmukha Liṅga from Bihar a combined image of Vishṇu, Durgā, Sūrya and Ganeśa is represented. In the Śiva-liṅga at Bodh Gaya,

installed in the reign of Dharmapāla, we find Vishṇu, Sūrya and Bhairava on the three sides of the Liṅga.

B. Society

Society in this period continued to be based mainly on the Varnāśramadharma, though numerous castes and sub-castes had sprung up. The division of society into four varṇas and of an individual's life into four stages, as laid down in the Hindu Smṛitis, was the acknowledged basis of the social order. Even the Buddhist Pāla kings were loyal to this and enforced the law accordingly. The Brāhmaṇas enjoyed great respect and were offered gifts such as villages to help in the performance of their duties. Vedic studies progressed and their popularity is proved by the seals of Chaturvidyā and Traividyā found at Nālandā. Brāhmaṇas from Madhyadeśa, believed to be the seat of Vedic learning, were welcomed in the State by kings and people alike. One such immigrant family of Garga supplied a line of hereditary ministers to the Pāla kings. The Brāhmaṇas were occasionally employed as ministers, priests and teachers. The Kshatriyas, the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras continued to perform the same functions as before. The untouchables lived outside the cities. Chandālas, doms, fishermen, adivasis and hunters are referred to by the Siddhas. That untouchability existed is also proved by Dharmaswāmī. Once while in danger of being drowned in a river in Magadha, his appeals for help were unanswered by an untouchable on the bank, who did not stir because he was afraid of touching a Tibetan monk! Though marriage within the caste was a general rule, there were instances of inter-caste marriages especially among the ruling dynasties.

Our information about the food and living habits and the standard of living of the people is very meagre. Both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food was eaten. Dharmaswāmī refers to the wide popularity of sugar as an article of food. Cooked rice with ghee and curds was also considered high-class food. Pān (betel leaf) was believed to be good for the teeth and was used in Bihar. Wine-drinking is refered to in the dohas of the Siddhas. It is possible that toddy and fermented liquor were also drunk. As far as the dress of the people is concerned our main sources are the sculptures and paintings of the period. Men used to wear the dhoti and chaddar. The wearing of turbans and often of mukutas, probably for royalty or divinity, was not unknown. Women wore the sari and choli and were bareheaded. Elaborate

coiffures were the fashion. Eye-paste was used and antimony rods have been found. Clothes were of a fine texture and were often printed with different kinds of flowered designs. Ornaments were used by both men and women. Armlets of different kinds, necklaces of one or more strings and shaped like half-moons were in use. Waist-bands of different shapes and designs were used by women. Ear-rings, tops and pendants were also worn. Shoes of leather and wood were used and some wore them without side-straps ('panahi'). The region of Magadha was infested with mosquitoes. Well-to-do people used mosquito nets. Fans were also in use. Rāhula Śrībhadra slept under a curtain and also had a fan in sultry weather. Magadha appears to have been notorious for its fever. Tibetan residents of Nālandā University suffered from this, as did Dharmaswāmī whose condition once caused much anxiety. The fever referred to might have been some form of malaria.

C. Education, Sciences, Language and Literature

EDUCATION

This period adds much to the history of the ancient system of education. The Buddhist monasteries of Nālandā, Vikramśilā, Odantpuri, Vajrāsana, Tilādhaka and Yaśovarmapura were situated in South Bihar. Monastic education had made great progress and these institutions became international centres of learning, spreading Indian religion and culture abroad. Nālandā gave the highest possible education not only in Buddhist studies, but also in Vedic and secular subjects. Taṅtra was a special subject of study in these Universities.

There was admirable co-operation between the different universities, and teachers of one university could join other universities without any difficulty. The spirit of inter-university co-operation went so far as to make Dipaṁkaraśrī Jnāna (Atisa) 'holder of the keys' of many monasteries in Magadha. Scholars from different parts of the country were invited to fill the posts of teachers. No parochial or sectional bias was shown. Vīradeva belonged to Nagrahāra, Jetari to Varendra, Ratnavajra to Kashmir, and Vāgīśwara to Vārānasi. Tibetan scholars were always coming to Nālandā and Vikramśilā for higher studies. In the early 11th century, the Tibetan king sent a mission to invite Buddhist scholars from Vikramśilā to reform Buddhism in Tibet. The mission, learning that Atisa was the most learned scholar, extended

an invitation to him. His departure was looked upon as a great loss to Buddhist scholarship in Bihar, where he had many plans for writing books. But when the invitation was renewed the second time, Atisa left for Tibet in A.D. 1041. Many other scholars of Vikramśilā also went to Tibet on missionary work. Vairochana, a pupil of Padmasambhāva, went to Vikramśilā from Nālandā and then on to Tibet. Jetari, on whom the king of Magadha had conferred the title of Pandit, translated many works into Tibetan. Ratnākara who had come to Vikramśilā from Odantpuri, went to Ceylon. Ratnavajra, a native of Kashmir had first gone to Vajrāsana and finally came to Vikramśilā when he became a Dvārapandit of the University. He later went to Tibet and there translated many Sanskrit works into Tibetan. Vijayasiṁha was an associate of Atisa in Tibet. From Nālandā, Śāntarakshita, Padmasambhāva and Kamalaśilā went to Tibet on missionary work. Later Budhakirti of Nālandā, a pupil of Abhayakaragupta, also went to Tibet and there wrote many books in Tibetan. Two kumāraśrīs, namely Karnapati and Karnaśrī, of Nālandā worked in Tibet and translated many Sanskrit works into Tibetan. Among the scholars who went to China during this period, mention may be made of Śubhākarasiṁha who had studied at Nālandā. He died in China in A.D. 735.

The last of the great Indian teachers who went to China were Vajrabodhi and his disciple, Amoghavajra. Vajrabodhi belonged to a royal family of Central India (generally identified with Magadha in Chinese sources), and studied at Nālandā for eleven years. He went to Ceylon and from there accompanied a mission to China. He reached Canton in 720, introduced Vajrayāna in China and translated many books into Chinese. He died in China in 732. His Indian disciple, Amoghavajra, whose family had settled in Ceylon, went to China twice and lived there till his death in 774.

Prajñā, though a native of Kāpisa, studied at Nālandā, and later sailed for China arriving there in 781. Prajñāviśvāsa, a monk of Bodh Gaya, completed one work in Chinese. In 973, the Chinese emperor received a monk from Nālandā named Fa-Hien, alias Dharmadeva, and showed him great favour. Fa-Hien translated a large number of books into Chinese and was head of the Imperial Bureau of Translators. He died in 1001. Buddhakirti, another monk of Nālandā, went to China in 989. Dharmarakshā, a Buddhist monk of Magadha, took a large number of Sanskrit manuscripts to China in

1004 where he translated twelve texts into Chinese and died there in 1058. Maitreyabhadra, another Buddhist monk of Magadha also went to China in the 11th century and became the Rājaguru of the emperor. After 1036, the Chinese chronicles have nothing more to report on the arrival of Indian monks in China. Like the Tibetans, the Chinese also used to come to Bihar especially as pilgrims to the holy places. Five Chinese inscriptions of such pilgrims have been found at Bodh Gaya. The last is dated 1033 and refers to the erection of votive stūpas at Bodh Gaya in the name of the Dowager Empress of China.

Thus it is obvious that during this period Bihar was a centre for close and friendly collaboration between India and Tibet and India and China. The universities of Bihar took the lead in spreading Indian culture and religion in those countries.

LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

SANSKRIT

Sanskrit was the only acknowledged medium of writing for the learned and cultured. The inscriptions of this period are found to have been written in polished Sanskrit. Valuable contributions were made to Sanskrit literature. Scholars of Nālandā and Vikramśilā made outstanding contributions to Buddhist literature and especially to Tāṅtrik literature. Among the early Nālandā scholars of this period was one Śāntideva. Most probably he was a native of South Bihar, born in Sabour near Bhagalpur, called 'Zahor' in a Tibetan catalogue. Rahul Sāṅkṛityāyana identifies him with the Siddha Bhusuka and makes him a contemporary of Devapāla, while Bhattacharya places him earlier, in the first part of the 8th century A.D. Sāntideva was the author of *Sutra-Samuchchaya*, *Sikshā-Samuchchaya*, and *Bodhicharyāvatāra*. He is also credited with writing a book on Buddhist Tāṅtrism known as *Śrī Guhyasamaya-Mahāyoga-Taṅtrāvalividhi*. Śāntarakshita, a pandit of Nālandā, is the author of *Tattva-Saṁgraha*; his other work was *Mādhyamikālaṅkāra Kārikā*, only a Tibetan edition of which is now available. He was also born in Zahor or Sabour. His pupil Kamalaśilā following his guru, also went to Tibet where he wrote such important books on logic and philosophy as *Nyāyabindu-purva-pūksha-Saṁkshepa*, a criticism on the *Nyāyabindu* of Dharmakirti. He also wrote a commentary called *Tattva-Saṁgraha Pañjikā* on the *Tattva-Saṁgraha* of Śāntarakshita. Achārya Jnānapada of Vikramśilā wrote a number

of books on Tantra, of which only Tibetan editions are available. Padmasambhāva's pupil Vairochana, while in Vikramśilā composed the *Bodhi-Sattva Charyāvatāra Pañjikā* and the *Ratna-vādachakra* and translated numerous other works into Tibetan. Achārya Jetari, another Pandit of Vikramśilā, wrote standard works on logic and philosophy such as *Hetu-Sattva-Upadeśa, Dharmadharni Vinischaya* and *Bālāvatāra-tarka*. Ratnavajra, Dvārapandit of Vikramśilā, was the author of *Yukti-Prayoga,* a remarkable book on Buddhist logic. During his stay in Tibet he translated a large number of Buddhist works such as *Mahāyāna-sādhanā, Śrī Akshobhya-Varga-Sādhanā* and other Tantra works. Ratnākarasena, another Vikramśilā professor, wrote *Chhando-ratnākara* and many other books on Buddhist philosophy, nine of which are available in Tibet. *Vijñapati-mātra-Siddhi* and *Antara-Vyāpti* are the most important. Dipankara Śrijnāna was another prolific writer. About 200 works, original or Tibetan translations, have been attributed to him. He translated 22 Sanskrit works into Tibetan. Jnāna Śrimitra of Vikramśilā wrote books on Buddhist logic such as *Kārya karaṇa bhāvasiddhi, Tarka-bhāshā* and *Pramāna-vinischchya-tikā*. One of the last great scholars of Vikramśilā, Abhayakaragupta, wrote the great *Muni-mahālankāra*.

Bihar scholars in China also translated many works into Chinese. Vajrabodhi translated a number of mystic Buddhist works into Chinese. His disciple, Amoghavajra, also was an indefatigable translator. He had taken to China 500 texts and translated there no less than 77 texts into Chinese. Dharmadeva or Fa-Hien, who went to China from Nālandā in the last quarter of the 10th century, was the greatest translator of the period, translating as many as 118 Sanskrit texts into Chinese.

Before we conclude this survey of Sanskrit Buddhist literature and the Tibetan and Chinese translations, a reference may be made to the Vernacular literature, Prākṛit-Apabhraṁśa, in which the Buddhist Siddhas, some of whom have been identified with the Pandits of Nālandā and Vikramśilā, composed their gitas or dohās for the masses. Some regard the language of the dohas as proto-Bengali, some as Maithili while others take it to be proto-Magahi. Numerous works of these Siddhas have been discovered in Tibet. For instance, Sarahapā's 32 works on Vajrayāna have been found translated into Tibetan. Some of his works in the Apabhraṁśa have also been translated into Tibetan. Here below are a few details about Apabhraṁśa and Maithili.

RISE OF APABHRAṀŚA AND MAITHILI

The period saw the emergence of Eastern New Indo-Aryan languages (commonly known as Magadhan languages) from the local variety of Apabhraṁśa. A cruder form of Sanskrit had been the spoken language of Aryan India up to *c.* 500 B.C. From the fifth century B.C., the language took on an altered form, which at first differed from spoken Sanskrit only in its easier pronunciation of conjunct consonants but gradually became more and more simple in grammar. This form of the Indo-Aryan language is called Middle Indo-Aryan (loosely called Prākṛit). Its earliest form is to be found in the Aśokan inscriptions and in the Pāli language. The later form of Middle Indo-Aryan is represented by the local Prākṛit languages such as Māgadhi, Ardhamāgadhi, Śauraseni, Mahārāśtri, Paiśāci, Gāndhāri and so on. Apabhraṁśa was the latest phase of Middle Indo-Aryan. A simplified and colloquial form of it, called Avahattha (i.e. Apabhrasta) was the direct ancestor of the Eastern New Indo-Aryan languages such as Bhojpuri (the language of West Bihar and parts of Eastern U.P.), Magahi (the language of South Bihar; the direct descendant of Māgadhi, at least in name), Maithili (the language of North Bihar), Oriya (the language of Orissa), Bengali (the language of Bengal), and Assamese (the language of Assam).

From the very start, Middle Indo-Aryan had shown dialectical peculiarities in the different regions of Aryan-speaking India. The different Prākṛit languages, such as Māgadhi, Ardhamāgadhi and others, seem to have been ultimately based on Middle Indo-Aryan regional dialects current between 500 B.C. and A.D. 500. In the east, we have the Eastern dialect of the Aśokan inscriptions as recorded in the Kālsi, Dhauli and Jaugaḍa edicts, as well as in all the minor edicts and pillar inscriptions. Not all the characteristics of the Māgadhi Prākṛit of old grammarians are found in the Eastern dialect of Aśokan times. They are however found in a document contemporaneous with Aśoka, namely in the Ramgarh Hill cave inscription. It is noteworthy that the site of the inscription (Sargujā State) is far beyond the farthest boundary of Magadha and that the inscription was made by a man from Vārānasi. The latter fact is important, for it indicates that Vārānasi was within the eastern linguistic group in the third century B.C.

As already mentioned, the immediate ancestor of the 'Magadhan' languages was Apabhraṁśa-Avahattha which, as a literary language,

was used, next no doubt, to Sanskrit, from one end of Northern India to the other. This literary Apabhraṁśa-Avahattha is made known to us by a mass of literary records. From a study of them, it is evident that it had local forms in the different regions of the country. These regional forms gave rise to different Eastern Indo-Aryan dialects some time about A.D. 1000. This is the starting point in the career of the New Indo-Aryan languages in Eastern India.

From the earliest days of Aryan settlement up to the nineteenth century and even later, Sanskrit had been the literary and cultural language *par excellence*. During this period, specially in the earlier part, many works of high quality were produced in Sanskrit. But except for the inscriptions of Aśoka and the Ramgarh Hill cave inscription, we have no literary specimens of Middle Indo-Aryan in the east prior to the seventh or eighth century. Mahāvīra belonged to the east and the Buddha, although born outside the region of the eastern language, spent most of his days preaching in Magadha. It is certain that these two Masters often (if not always) delivered their sermons in the eastern language and that these sermons were taken down in their original form. Long afterwards, the sermons of Mahāvīra were translated into Ardhamāgadhi and those of Buddha into Pāli and Hybrid Sanskrit. The oldest strata of Jain and Buddhist literature therefore, contain in their essence the relics of the religious literature of Eastern India.

Apabhraṁśa-Avahattha was largely developed by the Jainas of the East and West. It was also cultivated to some extent by (Mahāyāna) Buddhists of the East. But evidence of the secular use of the language comes mainly from the East. *Prākṛita-paingala*, a comprehensive work on Prākṛit and Apabhraṁśa-Avahattha prosody, compiled in Vārānasi some time about 1450, contains a large number of verses on different topics by different poets, most of them anonymous. Some of the verses are fine instances of popular lyric poetry, quite a few of which are eulogies of kings and heroes. Among the poets mentioned, we find such historical names as Hammira, Jajjala, Chandeśvara, and Haribrahma. A few verses give us flitting pictures of the life of ordinary people.

The vogue of Apabhraṁśa-Avahattha writing did not die out with the rise of the New Indo-Aryan Vernacular, generally called Laukika. The Tāntrik Buddhist writers of Bengal and the neighbouring regions employed the three languages: Sanskrit, Apabhraṁśa-Avahattha and the Vernacular equally well. They used Sanskrit in

their philosophical and scholarly works and in chaste literary compositions. They used Apabhraṁśa-Avahattha in their popular sermons addressed to the neophytes and the laity. These sermons of moral teachings are incorporated in the *Dohā-Kosha* of Sarahapā, Tillo and Kānha. In mystic songs (with the secret of the esoteric sādhanā) the Vernacular was the medium. This is found in the Charyā songs of Lui, Kānha, Sarahapa, Dhama, Bhusuku, Śānti, Jayānandi, Kukkuri, Dārika, Tānti, Nāra and others. These Siddhāchāryās flourished between the tenth and the thirteenth century. The language of the Charyā songs was written in an Eastern vernacular closely resembling the different local varieties of the New Indo-Aryan of the east. Charyā songs were equally intelligible to the speakers of all eastern dialects. Moreover, the Siddhāchāryās did not all belong to only one region but they came from Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and even from as far west as Saurashtra. The monasteries (Mahāvihāras) of Tāṅtrik Buddhists in Bengal and Bihar (viz. Pāndubhūmi, Jagandala, Somapura, Vikramśilā, Nālandā and Odantpuri) were open to scholars and monks from everywhere.

Outside the Charyā songs, we have no indication of the state of vernacular literature prior to A.D. 1200. No doubt the spoken language then was not thought elegant enough to be used in general literature, but folk-poetry must have existed in profusion and much of this material was gradually incorporated into the lyrics and ritualistic poems of subsequent centuries. The social life of the people was almost entirely full of rituals and religious functions. The annual festival of the village god and goddess was the occasion for the contributions of the poet and the musician. The recital of narrative poems, Paurāṇic and historical plays, mimicry and stage-plays (yātrā), songs and dances of various kinds went on before the temple of the village deity. This was the environment and social set-up into which vernacular literature was born from religious tradition and folk-lore.

It was religious bias which determined the course of development of vernacular literature from its very inception. There was good historical and romantic poetry existing in Apabhraṁśa-Avahattha and in folk-lore too. A very good instance is the story of Lor. In the folk-poetry of South Bihar, this story has assumed epic status but in literature itself there is hardly any reference to it except Jyotirishwar's mention of the 'Lorik Dance' in his *Varṇaratnākara* (thirteenth century).

During this period, the same script was used throughout East

India, i.e. from Vārānasi (and further West) to Assam. This was the eastern version of the Kutila or later Nagari script.

Maithili, a language spoken in the region comprising practically the whole of North Bihar, excluding Chapra and part of the Champaran and Muzaffarpur districts, is one of the earliest developed New Indo-Aryan tongues.

The history of this Aryan speech, as introduced into Mithilā has, for the sake of convenience, been divided into three periods : (1) Old Indo-Aryan (roughly from 1500 B.C. to 600 B.C.) comprising Vedic and classical Sanskrit; (2) Middle Indo-Aryan (from 600 B.C. to A.D. 1000) consisting of all Prākṛit forms including Apabhraṁśa and (3) New Indo-Aryan (from A.D. 1000 to modern times).

It is generally believed that till the 9th century A.D. the languages of eastern provinces such as Bihar, Bengal, Assam and Orissa had not developed any features distinct enough to be clearly distinguished from one another. That is the reason why the earliest records (originally in Maithili script) of the New Indo-Aryan language the 47 padas of Siddhāchāryas (published by Bangīya Sāhitya Pariśad, under the title *Bauddha gān o Dohā*, which were brought by the late Pandit Hara Prasad Shastri from Nepal, have been equally claimed by each of the eastern linguistic groups, including Bengali and Oriya, as compositions in that language. It is a fact that at such an early period as A.D. 800—1200, to which the Siddhācāryapadas belong, the language shows features common to all Māgadhan and Maithili speeches, as well as to Bengali and Oriya, besides sharing some characteristics, with Śauraseni Apabhraṁśa. For present purposes, the language used may be looked upon as a sample of old Maithili.

The subject-matter of the above-mentioned padas relates to the esoteric doctrine and practice of the school of Buddhism known as Sahaja or Vajrayāna. This school was so called from the fact that it supplied an easy method for attaining the *summum bonum*, which in the specialized Buddhist terminology was nothing but the attainment of Śunya or the Void. The text in the edition of Pandit Hara Prasad Shastri is accompanied by a gloss and explanation in Sanskrit. But the text is so full of technical terms and so unfamiliar even to the commentator that it has been designated as 'Sandhyā Bhāśa', a language which half-reveals and half-conceals and is clear only to the initiated. We may, for example note the following verses:

आलिएं कालिएं बाट रुन्धेला
तो देखि काराहु बिमन भइला
काराहु कहीं गइ करिब निवास
जो मण-गोअर सो उआस
ते तिनि ते तिनि तिनिहो अभिन्ना

भांराह काराहु भव-परिच्छिन्ना
जे जे आसला ते ते गेला
अवना-गवणे काराहु बिमन भइला
हेरि से कान्हि णिअड़ि जिनौर वट्टइ
भणइ काराहु मो हिअहि न बैसइ

आइरि एहीं उद्धधूलिअ छारें
सीससु वाहिअ ए जड-भारें
घरहिं वइसी दीवा जाली
को नहिं वइसी घंडा-चाली

घरे अच्छै बाहिरे गइ पेक्खइ
पइ देक्खइ पउवेसी पुच्छइ
सरण भराइ बढ जानउ अप्पा
णाउ सो धेअ ण धारण जप्पा

देब बि पुज्जइ लक्ख बि दीसइ
अप्पणु मारिअइ स कि करिअइ
तोबि ण तुट्टइ एहु संसार
बिणु आभासें णाहिं णिस्सार

The Siddhāchārya padas were composed by Buddhist saints and teachers belonging to Vihāras at Nālandā and Vikramśilā. Although these Vihāras were of a cosmopolitan nature, drawing scholars and savants from possibly all parts of India and abroad, the fact remains that they were located in areas where Maithili was either freely spoken (as for example, in Vikramśilā) or was considered to be a cultivated language.

The Siddhāchārya padas extend over a long period, namely from the 8th to the 12th century. The earliest composition is by Sarahapā and the latest by Dhendhanapā. This galaxy of Buddhist saints and savants belong to the Sahajayāna school which borrowed not only from Mahāyāna Buddhism but also formed a kind of amalgam of

Tāntrikism and Śaivism. Matsyendranātha, Goraksanātha and others have been claimed as its teachers.

It is of special interest to note that the cultural atmosphere of Siddhāchārya padas has not been so faithfully reflected elsewhere, as in Maithili. Here in *Varṇaratnākara* (published by the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1940) of Jyotirīśhwar Thākur (13th century A.D.) which is the first regular Maithili work, we find references to Siddhāchāryas, as also to the treatment they received in the medieval period when Brāhmaṇism revived:

सीलनाथ, गोरक्षणाथ, चौरंगीनाथ, चामारीनाथ, तन्तिपा, हलिपा, केदारिपा ड़ोंगपा, दारिपा, विरुपा, कपाली, कमारी, कान्हकन, खल, मेषल, उन्मन, कान्तलि, धोवी, जालन्धर, डोंगी, सरह, नागार्जुन, दौली, भिषणि, अचिति, चम्पक, मेदिनि, चेराटस, भुसुरि, धाकलि, कुजी, चर्प्पटि, भादे, चान्दन, कामरि, करवत, धर्म्मपा, पतंग, भद्र, पालल्भिद्र, पालिहिह, भाराउ, मीनो, निर्दय, सवर, सान्ति, भर्तुंहरि, भीसन, भटी, गगणपा, गमार, मेराडरा, कुमारी, जीवन, अघोसाघर, गिरिवर, सीयारी, नागवालि, घिमरह, सारंग, विनिकिधज, मकरधज, अचित, विचित, नेवक, चारल, नायन, भीलो—पाहिल, पासल, कमल, कंगारी, चिपिल, गोबिन्द, झम, भैरव, भद्र, भमरी, भुरुकुटि, चउरासी सिद्धा शरतक चान्द अइसन निर्म्मल, बौद्धपक्ष अइसन आपात भीषण, उदयनक सिद्धान्त अइसन प्रसन्न ।

Before we close this subject, we have also to consider another type of writing which perhaps belongs to an earlier period. The writings of Dāka and Ghāgha (published by the Maithili Sāhitya Pariśad, Darbhanga, 1944 under the title *Maithila Dāka*). These writings belong to one of the earliest stages of the progress of the Aryans when they took to agriculture in Northern India. In Maithilā, Dāka is traditionally regarded as the son of Varāhamihira (about the sixth century A.D.), who possessed the power of reading the signs of nature, particularly in relation to rains and drought. How far the sayings of Dāka or Ghāga, can be taken as compositions of a single individual is uncertain. Anyway, there they are, although their language has gone on changing from generation to generation! We may take note of the following lines:—

साओन पछवा भादव पुरिबा
आसिन बहय इसान ।
कातिक कन्ता सिकिओ न डोलय
कहां क रखब्ह धान ॥

घोड़ का जोतिह अधिक महि अधिह
ऊंच के बन्हिह आरि
जीं खेत तै ओ नहि उपजहुं
डाक के पढिह गारि।

RISE OF HINDI

Hindi, like the Romantic languages of Europe, developed through a process of convergence and not of divergence. According to the *Kuvalayamālā* of Udyotan Suri, there were sixteen regional languages or dialects in the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. Though the northern languages and dialects between the Punjab and Bihar and Bengal, had local peculiarities of their own when spoken, they were gradually converging towards a norm. The Apabhraṁśa works, between the 8th and the 12th centuries, reveal that the literary language during this period had become to a great extent standardized, and that there was not much difference between the written local forms. The emergence of Hindi (more properly, proto-Hindi or Māgadhi-Hindi) as the common literary language is clear from the Apabhraṁśa works of this period. The contribution of Bihar to the rise and growth of the Hindi language and literature through this process of convergence, is best witnessed in the works of the Siddha poets, which provide the earliest specimens of Māgadhi-Hindi yet available. Some scholars say that they are in early Maithili.

Since the publication in 1916 of the *Bauddha gān o Dohā*, consisting of some of the texts of these Siddha poets, various theories have been advanced concerning their language. The noteworthy point in this connexion, however, is that most of these Siddha padas were originally written in the Nālandā and Vikramśilā universities of Bihar. Several of the writers also belonged to these areas. The assumption that the basic language which they used was the form of Māgadhi or Magahi prevalent at that time is therefore very strong. With this foundation, they evolved a literary form which could be widely understood, by freely mixing standardized forms of the western Apabhraṁśa with current phrases. Early Hindi is really the outcome of this process of blending, the earliest specimens being found in the Siddha literature of Bihar.

Jaiswal and Rahul Sankrityayana were the first to draw attention to the origin and evolution of Proto-Hindi or Māgadhi-Hindi in these Siddha writings, and to claim that the earliest period of Hindi literature was the beginning of the 8th century. There is close affinity

between the language of even the earliest of these poems, and Hindi. The Hindi 'Chhāyās' of a few selected specimens of the Siddha poets as given by Rahul Sankrityayana in his *Hindi Kāvya Dhārā* gives evidence of this fact. One of the most convincing points that may be urged in favour of the Siddha literature being the rising phase of Māgadhi-Hindi literature is that the literary forms and metres used in them, especially the 'Dohās', 'Paddharis' and the 'Padas', have their traditions preserved and developed in Hindi, and their prosodic features are in consonance with Hindi phonetics. A study of linguistic forms also reveals analytic tendencies during this period. There are numerous instances of uninflectional forms of nouns and of adjectives and participial (kridanta) formations which, though used as adjectives, have undergone no correlative alternations due to gender, number or person. This is a distinct mark in the evolution of Hindi from the Apabhraṁśa stage.

The Siddha poets of Bihar belonged to the 'Vajrayāna' sect of Buddhism, a branch of Sahajayāna. They tried to keep as near to the spoken language of the people as possible, since their aim was to preach to the masses. The preponderance of the 'tadbhava' in preference to the 'tatsama' forms in their writings is an outcome of this tendency.

The earliest of these Siddha poets was Sarahapā, (middle of the 8th century) whose alternative names, as mentioned in the texts, were Sarojavajrapāda and Rāhula-bhadra. A prolific writer, he resided at Nālandā, but later on shifted to Śriparvata in the district of Guntur. Thirty-two of his works on Vajrayāna doctrine are found translated in Tibetan Tan-jour. Of these, at least sixteen, as listed by Rahul Sankrityayana, were translated from the Magahi-Hindi texts. Special mention may be made of his *Dohā-Kosha, Kāyākosha-Amṛitavajragiti, Sarahapādagitikā, Charyāgiti Dohā Kosha* and *Mahamudropadeśa Dohā-Kosha*. He has mercilessly criticized in his works caste distinctions, book knowledge, meaningless superstitions and worship of deities with pompous rituals.

Śabarapā (early 9th century) was a resident of Vikramśilā and one of the disciples of Sarahapā. Six of his works were written in Māgadhi-Hindi. They consist mostly of songs composed in a simple and charming language with forms which are mostly Magahi.

Bhusukapā (first half of the 9th century) also known as Śāntideva was the author of the work *Sahajagiti*, a Tibetan translation of which exists.

Lui-pā also belonged to Magadha and flourished in the first part of the ninth century. Tibetan versions of five of his works have been found. The symbolism used by him is very subtle and pointed. He has emphasized the importance of the 'Guru' and 'Brahma'. The influence of Lui-pā has been recognized by his being placed as number one in the list of the eighty-four Siddhas. He was himself a disciple of Śabarapā.

There is no doubt that Gorakhanāth was influenced by the writings of the Siddha poets of Bihar. Bihar served as a link between Rajasthan and the Punjab on the one hand and Bengal on the other. The rhymes of the Siddha poets, based on the folk-songs of the time, appear to have influenced Vidyāpati and other eminent Hindi poets such as Suradas, Tulsi and Kabir, as well as the poets of the Braja-buli-literature of Bengal and Assam.

Thus Bihar and especially its seats of learning such as Nālandā and Vikramśilā, seem to have been the cradle and the nursery of the earliest forms of Proto-Hindi or Māgadhi-Hindi language and literature.

One word, however, about the birth of Hindi. The claim of the Hindi language and literature to be as old as the 8th century has yet to be fully sustained. Sarahapā, the Siddha, no doubt composed his verses during the 8th century. But it has not yet been proved that what was written in the eleventh or twelfth centuries was exactly the same as what was composed and sung in the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries by the Siddhas and that it did not undergo any change. The dates of manuscripts cannot be the final proof of the form of language as used by the original composers, unless there has been a system of handing down compositions intact, as in the case of the Vedas. It is well known that oral compositions, for instance in Kannada and Marathi, did undergo changes in the course of centuries until they were reduced to writing. Moreover, there is still no inscriptional evidence for placing the birth of Hindi in the eighth or ninth century.

D. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The long and successful rule of the Pālas contributed to the economic well-being of the State. Agriculture was, as before, the mainstay of the people. Rice grown in Magadha was of a very fine quality fit to be eaten by 'noble grandees'. Wheat was another staple food product. Sugar-cane was cultivated on a large scale. Dharmaswāmī

found sugar-cane growing on both sides of a road in north Bihar. Indigo was also cultivated. This Tibetan monk carried away loads of sugar and dyes from Bihar.

Of the chief industries flourishing in Bihar, special mention may be made of bronze and copper casting. Numerous bronze or 'aśṭadhātu' images have been found in the Nālandā and Kurkihār sites. Furnaces for smelting metals have been found in Nālandā monastery. The large demand for images of gods of different faiths must have contributed to the prosperity of casters and sculptors. The profuse use of ornaments on images of the period indirectly attest to the prosperity and advance of jewellers and other craftsmen. Textile goods of the finest, almost diaphanous, texture were made. Cloth-printing must have been a profitable art. As articles of daily use were generally of clay, pottery flourished. The oil-pressing industry prospered and members of the Teli community made numerous donations and offered votive images in south Bihar. Tilādhaka may have been a centre of the Teli community. Even today the Telis constitute a large section of the population in the Bihar subdivisions. Trade and industry were organized into guilds as before. For trade facilities, markets were set up, often under direct royal patronage. A hāt called Devapāladeva Hatta was set up near about Nālandā. River traffic was common, an inscription of Dharmapāla refers to the large number of big boats in the Gangā at Pāṭaliputra. Siddhas refer to boats with masts and also to fishermen. Dharmaswāmī crossed the Gangā from north Bihar to Magadha in a large passenger boat. Such boats plying between north and south Bihar could accommodate as many as 300 passengers, paying fares. Brisk intercourse with China, Tibet, and South-East Asia must have not only facilitated religious and cultural contacts, but also contributed to an increase in foreign trade.

The medium of exchange was the 'cowrie' and 'bowrie' for petty things. Coins were also in circulation. Inscriptions refer to gold as well as to silver and copper coins. Drummas of the Pālas have been found in Bihar. The inscription of Vigrahapāla III, found in the village of Bangāon in Saharsa district in north Bihar, refers to coins called Purāṇas. Only one gold coin of Devapāla has so far been found. We do not, however, know the rate of exchange of these coins.

E. The Fine Arts

The brilliant role played by Bihar in the cultural field, as expressed through her sculptural and architectural wealth, continued undimmed

right up to the end of the twelfth century. Between the eighth and the twelfth centuries, a prolific and vigorous school of stone and bronze sculpture flourished in Bihar and Bengal, with Bihar as the focal point. Simultaneously, Bihar also developed a distinctive school of manuscript painting a few specimens of which have come down to us. Because this school of sculpture, bronze-casting and painting emerged under the patronage of the Pāla kings and because its main centre of production was Nālandā in Magadha, situated in Eastern India, this school is variously termed as Pāla, Magadhan or Eastern Medieval, the last name being popular as well as most appropriate. Much light has been thrown on this school by the Tibetan tradition as recorded by Tārānātha, who names two artists, father and son, Dhimān and Bitpālo, as being the founders of schools of cast-metal images, sculpture and painting in Eastern India in the ninth century during the reigns of Dharmapāla and Devapāla. These arts were largely (but not exclusively) devoted to Buddhist subjects because of two factors; first, they were developed under the patronage of the Pāla kings who were themselves zealous Buddhists and, second, their main centres of production were the Buddhist establishments in Bihar.

The Eastern school of sculpture, a direct descendant of the Eastern idiom of the Gupta plastic art, continued and perpetuated the eastern features of classical tradition, though on a lower level. The stone sculpture, mostly of black basalt, of this school is characterized by stylist elegance, technical precision, and a harsh outline akin to metal work. Though less refined and without the same spiritual experience of Gupta sculpture, the work of this school displays conspicuous dignity and sensuous serenity, reminiscent of the Gupta proto-types of Eastern India. The eighth-century sculpture of this school is distinguished by its linear tendency combined with a firm outline and tight modelling. The ninth-century works show charming naturalism and simplicity, within the limits of the restraint imposed by the canons of iconography and mark the culmination and fulfilment of this school of art. The tenth-century sculpture is characterized by its sobriety and dignity which are securely based on a strict adherence to the canonical prescription. In the eleventh century, decline sets in and despite all the elegance and self-assurance, there is a degeneration of modelling and a drying up of inner experience. The tendency of the eleventh century to emphasize detail at the expense of plastic conception is further accentuated in the twelfth century

when accessories become over-elaborated and the minutest detail is defined with a total disregard of the plastic feeling. The figures of the twelfth-century sculptures lose their significance and become passive wearers of profuse jewellery, carved with meticulous care, composition being drowned in a sea of ornaments.

As this school of art was mainly nurtured in the Buddhist monasteries of Bihar, headed by the University of Nālandā, its themes were largely Buddhist and represented, besides the Buddha, a variety of gods and goddesses, conceived by the Buddhism of that period. The iconographic forms of these gods and goddesses were standardized by means of 'sādhanās' or canonical formulae, describing their distinctive appearance, postures of body and hand, and their emblems down to the minutest details. After the seventh century, Mahāyāna Buddhism gradually drifted towards Tantra and Vajrayāna with their elaborate rituals and esoteric practices, including the use of mudrās, magical spells and mystic diagrams. The most prominent Śaiva influence which crept into Buddhism under the impact of Tāntrikism was the worship of Śakti or female energy, followed by the introduction of many Śaiva or other Brāhmaṇical deities or their iconographic features. As a result, the Buddhist pantheon was tremendously enlarged to include a host of male and female divinities, most of the gods having also their female counterparts. At the head of the pantheon stood the Ādi-Buddha from whom was supposed to issue five Dhyāni Buddhas, viz., Vairochana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi, who are represented as seated in Vajrāsana, each with a distinctive mudrā. Each Dhyāni Buddha was associated with the Dhyāni Bodhisattva and a goddess called Tārā. The Bodhisattvas corresponding to the Dhyāni Buddhas are Samantabhadra, Vajrapāni, Ratnapāni, Avalokiteśvara and Viśvapāni, who are shown in various forms with distinctive attributes. Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, the god *par excellence* of compassion and mercy, is the most frequently represented in this school and appears in a variety of forms, some of which have a striking affinity with well known aspects of Śiva and Vishṇu. The number of Dhyāni Bodhisattvas was subsequently increased from five to eight and included Manjuśrī, the god of transcendent wisdom, another favourite deity, with the sword and the book as his special mark. Of the several forms of Manjuśrī, *Arapachana* was the most popular in India and also in Indonesia.

According to the Mahāyāna pantheon, the Mānushi Buddhas are

the active agents on earth of the Dhyāni Bodhisattvas dwelling in heaven. There are in all eight Mānushi Buddhas of whom Gautama Buddha is the seventh and Maitreya, the future Buddha, the last. We have a few panels from Bihar which show all the eight Mānushi Buddhas, while there are also individual images of Maitreya and Gautama Buddha. Maitreya is depicted wearing the princely dress and ornaments of a Bodhisattva, with a nectar-pot, or nāgakeśara flowers or a stūpa as his special emblem. Bihar has also yielded numerous images of the Buddha, in various attitudes and mudrās (hand-poses), suggesting the miracles and principal events in the Master's life. The great miracles were his birth, his enlightenment, his first sermon and the great departure; while the lesser ones were his descent from heaven at Sankasya, the taming of the mad elephant at Rājgṛiha, the miracle at Srāvasti, and the gift of honey of the monkeys at Vaiśālī. A typical product of the Eastern Medieval school is the stele, showing in the centre the Buddha in the 'bhumi-sparśa-mudrā' representing the enlightenment, with the remaining seven miracles grouped round on the 'parabhāvali'. In some cases the central scene portrays the Buddha in 'dharmachakra-mudrā', depicting the first sermon at Sārnāth. Independent images representing the enlightenment and the first sermon were quite popular and occasionally other miracles were also portrayed independently. The crowned Buddha distinguishes the Eastern school as distinctive.

The Buddhist pantheon also comprised numerous gods and goddesses, of both benign and terrible appearance, who emanated from one or more of the five Dhyāni Buddhas. The goddesses, who outnumbered the gods, had at their head Tārā, who was highly esteemed in Eastern India and worshipped in various forms such as Khādiravani Tārā, Mahāchina Tārā, and Vajra Tārā. Other goddesses popularly represented in this school, included Prajñāpāramitā, the goddess of wisdom; Vasudhārā, the goddess of abundance; Nairātmā, resembling the Brāhmaṇical Kālī; Ekajāṭā; Bhṛikuti; Parnasāvari; and Marīchi. Of these Parnasāvari, wearing a skirt of leaves and carrying a bow and arrow, appears to have been derived from a non-Aryan cult; while Marīchi, usually depicted as three-faced (with one face of a sow), eight-armed, and driving a chariot drawn by seven pigs or horses, has obvious solar associations.

The Buddhist sculpture of the Eastern school is characterized by a prominent and elaborately carved back-slab and a lotus-seat,.

frequently supported by lions. The Buddhist formula, which is a cult-object with a fixed canonical form and esoteric symbolism, is usually engraved on some portion of the image. Two iconographic developments of this school are of great significance in the history of art and religion: (*i*) many of the Buddhist gods are depicted embracing their Śaktis, which under marked Tāntrik influence culminated in the 'Yab-yum' images. These images, it may be noted, became very popular in the later art of Nepal and Tibet; (*ii*) while some of the Buddhist gods such as Jambhala, Yamari, Hayagriva and Heruka, and goddesses such as Vasudhārā and Sarasvati, are but modified versions of Brāhmaṇical deities, a few Buddhist divinities like Trailokyavijaya trampling on the prostrate Śiva and Pārvati, and Aparājitā trampling on Ganeśa, display an aggressive and militant form of Buddhism, symbolic of the degenerate phase.

The Eastern school also produced a Brāhmaṇical sculpture which shared its developed iconography and other characteristics. Of the various forms of Śaiva icons fashioned by this school, Umā-Maheśvara, inspired by Tāntrikism, was even more popular than Ganeśa. Vaishṇava images were also produced in fair quantity during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Among the thousands of works of sculpture of this school, which are scattered all over Bihar, the largest number has been found at the monastic sites of Magadha, such as, Nālandā, Biharsharif, Ghosrawan, Tetrawan and Rajgir in the Patna district; and Bodh Gaya, Kurkihār, Telhara, Gunderi, Bishanpur and Dhārāwat in the Gaya district. The finest sculptures of this school include a female bust, a two-armed seated Nāgaraja (identified by some as Nāgārjuna), a four-armed Nāgi seated in 'lalitāsana' and two standing Avalokiteśvara images from Nālandā; and the Buddha seated in 'bhumisparśa-mudrā' and images of Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara seated in 'ardha paryaṅka', distinguished by lyrical feeling, from Bishanpur in the Gaya district.

The Eastern school also produced, simultaneously with stone sculpture, a remarkable series of bronze figures, of which the principal centres were Nālandā and Kurkihār. As bronze is handier and a more pliable medium than stone and susceptible to more minute execution and precise definition, it allowed fuller play to the genius of the Eastern artists who loved to dwell on detail. While on the whole sharing the traits of the Eastern school of sculpture, the bronzes of the period in Bihar are characterized by a higher technical

accomplishment and a more compact modelling, combined with a remarkable dignity and warmth of expression. Both technically and aesthetically, therefore, the bronze figures are on a higher creative level than their stone counterparts.

The majority of the bronzes found at Nālandā and Kurkihār date between the ninth and eleventh centuries, which constituted the peak of their production. The art of metal-casting attained a high degree of proficiency at the Buddhist centre of Kurkihār (ancient Kukkutapadagiri), as well as at the University of Nālandā, where it appears to have formed a part of the curriculum. The bronze figures were usually cast by the '*cire perdue*' process and are subsequently carefully finished, sometimes in gilt. Very often the eyes and the 'tilaka' on the forehead were inlaid silver pieces. The figures rest on lotus-pedestals and while a few of them have no support at the back, the majority are provided with a back-rest, a throne, a square frame, or a circular or oval halo which occasionally can be detached. The thrones are elaborately decorated with gajaśārdūla (elephant and lion) and other motifs and are supported by two lions, representing siṁhāsana (throne).

The themes of the bronzes are largely Buddhist, although a few of the Brāhmaṇical images of Tāṅtrik influence like that of Gangā, Balarāma (also from Kurkihār), Vishṇu and Sūrya have also been recovered from Nālandā. The bronzes at Nālandā and Kurkihār mostly portray the Buddha; the Bodhisattvas including Avalokiteśvara, Manjuśrī, Maitreya and Vajrapāni; and other Buddhist gods and goddesses, such as Jambhala, Haygriva, Tārā, Prajñāpāramitā, Vasudhārā, Hāriti and Parnasāvari. The Buddha is represented standing with the right hand held in the 'varada' and 'abhaya' mudrā and as seated in the 'bhumisparśa' and 'dharma chakra' mudrā, the last two suggesting the enlightenment and the first sermon. Crowned images of the Buddha have also been found in Kurkihār. Among the Buddha figures, a standing one from Nālandā with the right hand held in the abhayamudrā, is one of the finest pieces of bronze sculpture in the Eastern school because of its simple dignity, convincing modelling and inner poise. Among the Bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara is frequently represented in a variety of forms. A two-armed Avalokiteśvara, from Nālandā seated on an elaborate throne, and a standing four-armed inscribed image of the same god from Kurkihār are creditable works, the former for its superb finish and charming smile and the latter for its sensuous modelling and contemplative serenity. A

seated figure of the pensive Avalokiteśvara, which also comes from Nālandā, is another gem of unusual charm. Among the bronze figures of other Bodhisattvas, a Nālandā image of Maitreya seated in lalitāsana is notable for combining elegance and spiritual calm. But the palm is given to a couple of Tārā images (out of the numerous bronze figures of this popular goddess) from Kurkihār (Pl. XV. Fig. 36), which are rare marvels of sensitive casting and masterpieces of Eastern Medieval art. They are distinguished by their graceful poise, delicate modelling, sensuous warmth and subtle emotional appeal which are reminiscent of the stucco Nāgi from Rajgir and the bronze Buddha from Sultanganj, both immortal products of the Eastern school of Gupta art. The round cast of their faces showing clear eastern features and the extremely sensitive handling of the flesh on their bellies deserve special notice.

Bihar also developed a vigorous and distinctive school of manuscript painting between the ninth and the twelfth centuries. As other paintings illustrate palm-leaf manuscripts of Mahāyāna texts like the *Ashtasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* and the *Pañcharakshā*, written in the Buddhist monasteries of Nālandā and Vikramśilā, these paintings depict with a marked Tāntrik influence, besides the life, scenes and previous births of the Buddha, various Buddhist gods and goddesses of the developed Mahāyāna pantheon. These paintings are executed in red, blue, white and black primary colours and green; violet, light pink and grey secondary or mixed colours, on a fine variety of palm leaf, usually 22¼″×2¼″ in size, as well as on the lacquered wooden covers of manuscripts. This school of painting is characterized by delicate and nervous lines, sensuous elegance, linear and decorative accent and a high technical skill. In fact this school perpetuates the tradition of the Classical school of the Ajantā paintings with the sensuous bias of the art of Eastern India. The noses of the figures are sharp and the eyes doubly curved, showing nervous tension. Although less than a hundred miniatures of this school have survived and their themes are invariably hieratic and dry, these paintings nevertheless display conspicuous delicacy and charm. Following the destruction of the Nālandā and Vikramśilā Universities in *c.* A.D. 1200, the scholars of these Universities went with their illustrated sacred texts to the contiguous hill-tract of Nepal which, already a centre of this school of painting, now showed renewed vigour and activity, with a slight change of facial features to the Mongolian type.

History, literature and contemporary inscriptions bear testimony

to the existence of hundreds of monasteries, stūpas and temples in Bihar during this period. The most prominent influences of architecture in the Bihar of those days are to be found at Nālandā, Bodh Gaya, Vikramśilā and Odantpuri. The Odantpuri-vihāra (c. 750-770 A.D.) was so magnificent that it served as a model for the first monastery built in Tibet. The remains at Bodh Gaya and Nālandā provide a magnificent vista of the monasteries, stūpas and temples which adorned the two sites. Indeed the best place for the study of the Buddhist architecture of those days is Nālandā. The University had a well-planned layout, with a symmetrical row of monasteries on the east, facing a row of temples on the west, with wide space in between. The temples were solid rectangular two-tiered structures, the sanctum being centrally built on the upper tier, which was approached by a grand flight of steps. The facades of both the tiers were lime-plastered and embellished with elegant pilasters and projecting niches containing images. There was a passage for strolling around on each tier, the ground tier being surrounded by numerous votive stūpas. The highest temple, Stūpa Site III, was more than a hundred feet high and consisted of seven successive accumulations, of which the two uppermost belonged to the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Of the remaining shrines and temples, the three larger ones had practically the same plan and dimensions. These measured roughly 165 feet square and had prominent projections at each corner. One of these, Chaitya Site 12, was of the Panchāyatana type, with a subsidiary shrine at each of the four corners. The monasteries, which were college-cum-dormitories were imposing rectangular buildings, distinguished by their striking simplicity and uniformity of plan and design and an impressive symmetry of alignment (Pl. XV. Fig. 35). Their plan consisted of a spacious open courtyard, enclosed by a covered verandah, which led into the living rooms of the monks which were on all sides. Each monastery was entered from the west and had a chapel in the middle of the eastern row of rooms, facing the entrance. There was a pulpit in front of the chapel, from which discourses and lectures appear to have been delivered. Each monastery had more than one storey and this is indicated by the presence of staircases, originally lighted by large ventilators. The stūpas of Nālandā, like those of Bodh Gaya and other sites, had more terraces than one, which supported a long drum, decorated with niches and other ornaments and crowned by many umbrellas, as is indicated by the better-preserved votive stūpas and sculptured models. The

niches contained images of Dhyani Buddhas and life-scenes of the Buddha.

The Brāhmaṇical temples of the period, which once existed in Bihar in abundance, are now mostly in ruins and only a handful have survived in a reasonable state of preservation. Colgong in the Bhagalpur district has an interesting rock-cut temple, dating from *c.* ninth century, which shows the gabled vaulted roof characteristic of the South Indian architecture. Quite a few temples, built in the typical Orissan style of temple-architecture, exist in the border districts of Singhbhum, Manbhum and Ranchi. The best preserved of these is the stone temple of Māhādeva (Pl. XV. Fig. 37) standing on a rock at Khekparta in the Ranchi district. The brick-built medieval Śiva temple at Konch in the Gaya district, is architecturally important on account of its curvilinear śikhara (pinnacle) and corbelled lancet-window.

We have already seen how Bihar played a leading role in the development of the Eastern school of stone and bronze sculpture and painting. The Buddhist art and iconography of India were largely shaped and moulded by the school which also exerted a profound influence on the art and iconography of Nepal, Tibet, Burma, Siam and Indonesia. The Buddhist monasteries of Bihar, headed by the University of Nālandā, produced paintings and bronze figures in hundreds and stone sculptures in thousands, which were extensively distributed beyond the frontiers of Bihar. Bronzes of Nālandā, probably carried as handy mementoes by Buddhist pilgrims, have been found as far away as Kashmir, Chittagong and Sirpur in Madhya Pradesh. There is evidence of profound stylistic and iconographic influences emanating from Nālandā to the countries of the Buddhist east. Thus the Hindu-Javanese bronzes of Java have strong stylistic affinities with the Nālandā bronzes. Tibet and Nepal received from Nālandā and Vikramśilā, not only the Mahāyāna religion and philosophy but also Indian art which deeply affected their own arts of painting and metal sculpture. The earliest Tibetan silk paintings of *c.* the eleventh century, the Nepalese manuscript paintings, dating from *c.* the tenth to thirteenth centuries, and the medieval metal sculptures of Nepal were largely inspired by the paintings and bronzes of Nālandā. Stylistic influences from Nālandā also travelled via Burma to North Siam and moulded the Buddhist art of that region. Moreover, the ornate variety of stūpas, decorated with niches and multiple terraces and umbrellas, prevailing in Bihar from *c.* the eighth to twelfth centuries,

was accepted as the standard type by the rest of India as well as by most of the countries of South-East Asia. Bihar thus made an abiding and far-reaching contribution to the development of art and architecture, not only of India but of the entire Buddhist East.



XII

ANCIENT BIHAR'S CONTRIBUTION TO INDIAN CULTURE

IN the next chapter we shall be entering the medieval period of Bihar's story. It may not be out of place to mention here in brief the contribution of ancient Bihar to India. We approach the subject however, with great humility. India is so vast, varied and comprehensive in her achievements, that the role of the people of any one State is but like that of a small stream joining the mighty Gangā. Still this survey will serve a useful purpose.

If we review the broad outline of the history and culture of ancient Bihar as sketched in the preceding pages, we may be able to form some general idea of the part played by her people in the development of Indian thought and culture in their different aspects, political, intellectual, religious and artistic. Although these are not altogether disconnected with one another, it will be more convenient to deal with them separately, in order to get a comprehensive picture of the whole.

I. Politics

The most outstanding fact in the history of Bihar is the growth of an all-India empire embracing nearly the whole of India, Nepal and Afghanistan, up to the natural frontiers of this vast peninsula. The frontiers obviously are the Hindu Kush and Kirthar Range on the north-west, the Himalayas in the north, its south-eastern arms and offshoots on the north-east, and the sea on all the other three sides. The concept of the fundamental unity of India may be traced to a very early period of Indian history. It was emphasized and concretely expressed by a common designation, Bhārata-Varsha, applied to the whole country in the Epics and the Purāṇas. Foreigners too, from the Greeks down to the British, have always looked upon India as one

country. The legendary derivation of this name from King Bharata who lived in the prehistoric age vouches for the antiquity of the ideal. The stronghold it had on the mind of the people is proved even by stray passages in the Purāṇas, which deliberately stress the idea. Thus we read in the *Vishṇu Purāṇa* (11.3.1) :—'The country that lies to the north of the ocean and south of the snowy mountains (Himādri) is called Bhārata; there dwell the descendants of Bharata.' This sense of political unity finds frequent expression in the writings not only of political philosophers, but even of poets and theologians who speak of the 'thousand yojanas (measure of distance) of land that stretch from the Himalayas to the sea as the proper domain of a single universal emperor.' But although the ideal of the political unity of India was emphasized, it often remained an unrealized dream. The Epics and the Purāṇas, inspired by this ideal, use the epithets 'Chakravartin' (universal ruler) and Samrāt (emperor) to denote the paramount sovereign who realized this ideal. They give a long list of kings who, according to old traditions, established ascendancy over a large stretch of territory. But apart from the fact that there are no means to check their statements, even the biggest empire described by them falls far short of the ideal.

It was reserved for Magadha, a small State in south Bihar, to realize this dream and achieve this noble ideal of ancient times. It has been described already how, beginning as one of the numerous small States under Bimbisāra in the sixth century B.C., it slowly but steadily extended its boundaries under his successors till the great Mahāpadma Nanda united the whole of Northern India up to the border of the Punjab. The process was completed by the Mauryas under whom one single writ (ran from Pāṭaliputra over the area comprising) the Himalayas in the north, the Hindu Kush mountains on the north-west, the Kathiawar peninsula and Arabian Sea on the west, the plateau of Mysore in the south and the Bay of Bengal and the River Brahmaputra in the east. Records were written and writs issued in one language over this vast area, and the same script was used, except in the remote north-west corner.

The Maurya Empire is the first all-India empire that brought vividly to the forefront the basic and total unity of India. This political unity facilitated cultural unity by introducing the same pattern of language, literature, script, religion and art; so much so, that it survived the downfall of the Maurya Empire and ushered in a pattern of Indian culture which, in spite of diversity, never lost its

fundamental and essential unity, notwithstanding every kind of political vicissitude, during the past two thousand years and more.

Although this almost complete political unity of India, established by the Mauryas, did not survive long in its entirety the death of Aśoka, the ideal was never lost sight of in subsequent times. Of the various attempts to restore it, the most successful was that of the Guptas, who had their seat of government in the old imperial city of Pāṭaliputra in Bihar. After an interval of about five hundred years, they succeeded once more in bringing about the unity of Northern India, if not of India as a whole. This imperial tradition was not lost sight of, and five hundred years later, the Pāla emperors of Bengal and Bihar, with their capital in the same city of Pāṭaliputra, made another bold attempt to restore unity and succeeded, though only for a brief period.

It will thus appear that throughout ancient times, Bihar played the historical role of achieving the political unity of India and setting it up as an ideal for all great rulers. The city of Pāṭaliputra, from which radiated all these efforts throughout the centuries, is still the capital of Bihar, and may be regarded as the eternal city of India, and a symbol of the great traditions of her political unity.

The Maurya Empire which achieved the political unity of India also evolved, for the first time, an administrative organization suited to an all-India empire. It is immaterial for our present purpose to consider whether it was an original conception of the Mauryas or borrowed, at least partly, from the neighbouring Achaemenian Empire. The fact remains that an elaborate political machinery, which alone could sustain the political unity of India, was evolved for the first time in connexion with the Maurya Empire. This will be evident to anyone who compares the elaborate administrative system of the Mauryas with the simple framework of government described in pre-Mauryan literature.

This brings us to the question of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*. The many-sided administrative machinery, described in this work with a truly surprising fullness of detail, has been the model for all subsequent rulers. Theoretically, the book superseded all previous writings on the subject to such an extent that it practically extinguished them all, and was regarded as the standard work by subsequent writers. As a practical handbook, it held the field throughout India during the Hindu period, and rulers as well as statesmen looked to it for guidance and inspiration. It set a standard which was not surpassed nor even equalled anywhere in India in ancient times. It may be a

mere accident that, though composed in Bihar, the text of this long-lost work was recovered from the southernmost corner of India! This fact serves to emphasize the all-India character and importance of this great treatise, which was acknowledged as authority from one end of the country to the other.

In upholding Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* as a great contribution of Bihar to the rest of India, two preliminary points may be cleared. In the first place, according to tradition, Kauṭilya was not a native of Bihar, but a resident of Taxila (Takshaśilā-nagara-vāsi), now in West Pakistan. This raises an important issue which has to be discussed before a proper estimate of the contribution made by one part of India to the cultural development of the country as a whole can be made. Difficult as this task is, it becomes even more so when the contribution is made primarily by an individual. For in such cases, it is not always easy to determine whether credit should go to the country of his birth or the scene of his activities. This difficulty may be best illustrated by one outstanding example with which we shall have to deal in this very section. The great Buddha was born in a locality included in those days in the petty State of the Śākyas and today in Nepal. Yet few persons would be disposed to regard Buddhism, one of the great world religions, as a contribution of the Śākyas or of Nepal, for the whole process of the evolution of Buddhism is associated not with the native place of the founder of the religion, but with localities far away from it. Areas now included in Bihar and U.P. have far greater claim to the credit for the contribution of Buddhism than either the Śākya principality or modern Nepal.

The case of Kauṭilya is, to some extent, similar to that of the Buddha for, so far as available evidence shows, he like the Buddha spent the active part of his life in Bihar, in the courts of the Nandas and the Mauryas, and not in his remote birthplace in the Punjab. Besides, as the Prime Minister of Chandragupta Maurya and a prime mover in the great revolution that replaced the Nandas by the Mauryas on the throne of Magadha, his political theories and principles of administration may be assumed to have been developed in the political environments of Bihar. On the other hand, there is nothing to indicate that the land of his birth was in any way associated with those remarkable activities which alone could make him the great political thinker and practical statesman who could write a monumental and comprehensive treatise of such magnitude and authority as the *Arthaśāstra*.

The second point centres round the authorship of the *Arthaśāstra*, but it need not detain us long in the present context. For, although many scholars have expressed a genuine doubt about Kauṭilya being the author of the text of the *Arthaśāstra* as we have it now, there is a general consensus of opinion, even among them, that this text must be looked upon as a product of the political school founded by Kauṭilya. In either case, credit for the contribution of the rich treasure of political ideas and principles of administration contained in the *Arthaśāstra*, must go solely or primarily to Bihar, the scene of Kauṭilya's principal activities.

Greek and other classical writers were impressed by the efficiency of the civil and military administration of the Maurya Empire, and the descriptions they have left behind show that the administrative organization which the Mauryas set up, fixed more or less the general framework on which future Indian administrators built. It would not be too much to suppose that there was something unique in that organization which accounted for the continued success of the kingdom of Magadha in her fight with her rivals. The highly efficient bureaucracy and administrative machine, a full picture of which we get in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* and a partial account in the classical writings, may thus be regarded as another valuable contribution to Indian culture.

As regards military organization in Bihar in those early days, we learn from foreign accounts, as well as from local sources that the Nandas at the time of Alexander's invasion had an army comprising 200,000 infantry, 2,000 chariots, 20,000 cavalry, and about four thousand elephants. It is stated that Chandragupta Maurya maintained an army of 600,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry and 9,000 elephants. Kauṭilya speaks of four separate army departments, the infantry, the cavalry, the chariotry and the elephants, as well as the transport commissariat. All this shows that the army was systematically organized and its mobility and effectiveness was ensured. This system and organization continued during the reign of Aśoka and was later followed substantially by the Guptas and others who followed.

Regarding inventions and new methods in military art, we may quote here an earlier instance. We have an indirect but invaluable testimony in literature about the contribution of Bihar. We learn from Jaina texts that Ajātaśatru used in his wars two weapons quite unknown till then 'Mahāśīla-Kaṇṭaka' and 'Rathamusala'. It appears from available details that the first was a kind of catapult

by means of which very heavy blocks of stone could be hurled at a target from a long distance. The second was a special type of chariot, with long rods attached to it, which could be wheeled about at will, by some kind of internal mechanism. The destructive effect of such chariots upon the enemy line in those days of hand-to-hand combat can be easily imagined. Hoernle, in explaining the description of this weapon in the Jaina text, has observed:—'It seems to have been provided with some kind of self-acting machinery to propel it, as it is described to have moved without horses and driver; though possibly, as in similar contrivances in the Middle Ages, it was propelled by a person concealed inside, who turned the wheels.' It is perhaps legitimate to suppose that the invention of such novel military weapons lay at the root of Ajātaśatru's success in his military campaigns. Though details are lacking, we may attribute to this same cause the phenomenal military success of Chandragupta Maurya against the Greeks who had proved invincible at the time of Alexander and had carried their victorious arms from one end of the Punjab to the other. All these lead to the assumption that Magadha must have introduced considerable and remarkable innovations in various branches of military operations and left them as a legacy to the rest of India.

While Magadha in south Bihar was the centre of monarchical government, north Bihar (Tirhut of those days) furnishes us with the earliest examples in India of oligarchical republics, like those of Greece. The Vrijjis were a confederacy of eight republics with their capital at Vaiśālī as early as the 6th century B.C. The Lichchhavis seem to have been the most powerful of them. What is more important however is, that these republics evolved an elaborate system for conducting business in their democratic assemblies (saṅghārāmas). The significance of the system is enhanced on account of its having served as a model for the monastic order of the Buddha. He was an admirer of the Lichchhavi republic. Due notice of meetings, protocol officers, election of the speaker, calling the assembly to order, voting by secret ballot by means of coloured sticks (śalākā), abiding by the decision of the majority, and other such features, were essential parts of the system followed by the republics. Though republican traditions of government, except at the village level, seem to have vanished with the establishment of powerful monarchies and empires in India, we owe to Bihar the distinct and valuable memories of Indian republics which conducted themselves successfully for some centuries.

II. Intellectual

It is a remarkable fact that though Bihar was one of the last regions reached by the waves of Vedic culture, it soon rose to a position of intellectual pre-eminence in Vedic studies. During the phase of Vedic culture represented by the Upanishads, the court of Janaka, king of Videha, became one of its leading centres. King Janaka and the sage, Yājnavalkya of Mithilā, shed lustre on that age, and so great was their renown all over North India that even the Ṛishis (seers) of the Kuru-Pānchāla country, the centre of Aryan culture, were attracted to the court of Janaka in large numbers to profit by the discussions held about the supreme Brahman (Reality). The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* and to some extent even the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* seem to indicate that at a certain stage in the development of Upanishadic philosophy, the whole of North India acknowledged the lead of Videha in the intellectual and spiritual field. The *Mahābhārata* also refers to the spiritual enlightenment of Janaka, his talks with Panchaśikhā, Sulabhā and others, and the lessons he taught Śuka. The Vedic sacrifices performed by the kings of Videha, sometimes extending over a thousand years according to tradition, loom large in both Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist literature. On the whole, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that with the proverbial zeal of a new convert, Videha or North Bihar made a distinct contribution to the evolution of Vedic culture, specially to that phase or aspect of it which is associated with the Upanishads. The bold and refreshing freedom of spiritual speculation which led, at a later period, to the growth of Buddhism and Jainism, was already a characteristic feature of Videhan culture. It was destined to leaven the intellectual and spiritual life of the whole of India.

While North Bihar was fast developing into a highly flourishing centre of Upanishadic culture, South Bihar was also noted for another type of literary activity which was on a lower level. This is revealed by the use of the word 'Māgadha', as a generic term, to denote a class of bards whose special occupation was to preserve in song and literary composition the genealogies of kings. As Pargiter has pointed out, the Māgadhas were really the inhabitants of Magadha, though this term was applied in later times to denote a caste of mixed origin, presumably because its members followed the same occupation. The Māgadhas, along with the Sūtas, preserved traditions which later formed the nucleus of the Purāṇas. It follows therefore, that South Bihar made a distinct contribution to the growth of the Purāṇas.

With the growth of political power, there was an intellectual awakening even in South Bihar, and the mantle of Videha fell in later times upon Magadha. In the opinion of a distinguished scholar, Pāṭaliputra 'became the centre of the political, religious, intellectual and social life of India.' Reference may be made in this connexion to a remarkable passage in *Kāvya mīmāṁsā* by Rājśekhara, of the ninth century, which may be translated as follows: 'We have heard of the examination being held of the great authors of 'śāstras' (systematized knowledge) at Pāṭaliputra. It was here that Upavarsha and Varsha, Pāṇini and Piṅgala, as well as Vyādi, Vararuchi, and Patañjali—all these were tested (parikshitah) and gained renown.'

All these persons are well known as intellectual giants and are evidently arranged in chronological order. Traditionally, Varsha is the guru (preceptor) of Pāṇini, and Upavarsha the first promulgator of Mīmāṁsā doctrine. Pāṇini flourished about the fifth century B.C. if not earlier, and his commentator Patañjali in the first half of the second century B.C. Of the three names interposed between those two, Piṅgala is referred to in a Buddhist text as the guru of the sons of Bindusāra, including Aśoka, and this fits in with the chronology of the times.

How far this tradition should be regarded as authentic may justly be questioned. We have definite evidence that Patañjali lived at Pāṭaliputra and officiated as priest at a sacrifice performed by Pushyamitra, the Śuṇga king. The *Kathāsaritsāgara* has preserved the tradition that Pāṇini lived in the court of the Nandas. M. M. H. P. Sastri accepts the ninth century tradition as authentic history and, referring to quinquennial assemblies held at Pāṭaliputra under the Maurya kings for the award of merit, he observes that the Mauryas were not the first to institute such assemblies but merely continued the practice which had been in vogue for many centuries. He comes to the definite conclusion that Pāṭaliputra, since its very foundation in 500 B.C., had been the intellectual centre of India. Although one may not agree fully with this view, the traditional account of the pre-eminence of Pāṭaliputra as an intellectual centre cannot be dismissed lightly, particularly if we remember that the undoubted political greatness of Magadha makes it highly probable that Pāṭaliputra should develop also as an intellectual centre. There is force in Sastri's suggestion that the Persian conquest of the Punjab probably resulted in the transfer of the seat of learning from Taxila to Pāṭaliputra. It is interesting to note in this connexion that Kauṭilya who hailed from Taxila in the

Punjab certainly lived at Pāṭaliputra, and Pāṇini, who was born at Salatura near modern Attock in the Punjab, also probably resided there.

Pāṭaliputra is reputed to have been the scene of activity of many other eminent scholars. Mention has already been made of Kauṭilya. Another great scholar, who is definitely associated with Pāṭaliputra, is Dattaka, the author of a celebrated work on Kāma-śāstra. There were also many Jaina and Buddhist authors of eminence.

Bihar was undoubtedly the nucleus of the Gupta power, but if the story of the 'navaratna' or nine jewels of Vikramāditya has any historical value, the intellectual centre of this Age of Illumination was Ujjayinī and not Pāṭaliputra. Some of the greatest names of this age, like Kālidāsa and Varāhamihira, are definitely associated with Ujjayinī, and it is difficult to give precedence to Pāṭaliputra over Ujjayinī as an intellectual or cultural centre during the Gupta period. Nevertheless Pāṭaliputra may claim at least one of the greatest luminaries, Āryabhaṭṭa whose discoveries have given India an honoured place in the map of science of the ancient world. Indeed Pāṭaliputra maintained its old tradition and according to Dāmodaragupta, who flourished in the eighth century A.D., it was a home of learned Brāhmaṇas. So, on the whole, Pāṭaliputra may lay some claim to having made definite contributions to the intellectual activity of the Gupta Age.

During the Post-Gupta Age, Bihar once more took the lead in the intellectual development of India through original contributions in Nyāya and Mīmāṁsā. It was the home of Nyāya in the earlier period because of the famous *Nyāya Sūtras* of Gautama and later it gave birth to Navya Nyāya as well as to Mīmāṁsakas of the calibre of Kumārila and Maṅdana Miśra. The two great universities at Nālandā and Vikramśilā were the sources of inspiration, and centres for the spread of Buddhism not only in India but in many other countries.

III. Religion

Bihar may well claim to be the birthplace and the flourishing centre for centuries of both Jainism and Buddhism. The city of Vaiśālī was an important rallying point for the followers of Pārśvanāth. Vardhamāna Mahāvīra was born and brought up in a suburb of this city, and his missionary work was chiefly carried on in Bihar. The scholar Umāsvatī wrote his great work *Tattvārthādhigama sūtra* at Pāṭaliputra. Although at a later period, the centre of Jainism shifted to Western

India, Bihar, the scene of its birth and infancy, is justly entitled to the credit of contributing to the culture of India by nursing this great doctrine in its formative period.

Bihar, though not the birthplace of Buddha, was very intimately associated with the rise and development of Buddhism. It was the training ground of Gautama Buddha after he became a wandering ascetic, and it was here in Bodh Gaya that he attained supreme knowledge. His missionary activity was largely carried on in Bihar. Rājgṛiha and Vaiśālī, were his favourite places of residence. It was in Bihar, again, that the first three great Councils of Buddhists were held, at Rājgṛiha, Vaiśālī and Pāṭaliputra respectively, which fixed the Buddhist canon and gave a definite shape to that religion. The idea of sending missionaries abroad was accepted in the Third Council, and it was from Pāṭaliputra that Aśoka organized the network of missionaries. This ultimately made Buddhism a world religion, followed even today by a large part of the human race. Some of the greatest names associated with Buddhism, Sāriputta, Maudgalāyana, Tissa Moggaliputta, Upagupta, and Aśvaghosha, are definitely connected with Bihar.

Above all, Bihar was the home of Aśoka, the greatest name in the Buddhist world next only to that of Gautama Buddha. It was he who raised Buddhism from the position of a local sect to that of a world religion. But it was not merely as a Buddhist that Aśoka occupies a position of pre-eminence. His high ideals of kingship, his solemn vow taken after a great victory never to resort to war, his most advanced views about religious toleration and the sanctity of life preached and practised by him, the practical measures he adopted for providing medical and other amenities to both humans and animals specially through the provision of hospitals, his practical code of ethics which aimed at decency in domestic life, his humane treatment of slaves, servants and animals, and his serious attempts to bring about real improvement in the character and conduct of his subjects—all these have either become permanent features, or have profoundly influenced the growth, of Indian culture. The personality of Aśoka is one of the greatest contributions of Bihar to the annals of Indian history and culture. There is hardly any other figure in human history who can match his manifold attainments and monumental achievements as 'a philosopher king'.

Though much stress is justly placed on Buddhism and Jainism in making an estimate of Bihar's contribution to the development of

religious and ethical thought in India, one should not forget the other sects like the Ājīvikas who also, like the Buddhists and the Jainas, heralded a protest against the form and ceremony of the early Vedic religion. We should also remember that Videha was one of the principal seats of Upanishadic culture which adopted a highly refreshing, spiritual and liberal attitude towards the deeper meaning of life. It was this that paved the way for the growth of these heterodox and protestant schools. One may therefore well regard Bihar as a contributor in great measure to that freedom of thought, catholicity of spirit, and liberality of view which lay behind all these movements and which have given a distinct character to Indian culture.

IV. Art

The wonderful development of art both in the Maurya and Gupta periods have been described already. The introduction of stone and high polish, combined with mastery of technique, as displayed in the monolithic pillars and specially represented by the Lion Capital at Sārnāth, form the chief contributions of Mauryan art. The high refinement and intellectualism of the sculptures and paintings of the Gupta age set the classical standard in India which was alike the envy and despair of succeeding ages. There is no doubt, therefore, that the contribution of Maurya and Gupta art to the general development of Indian sculpture and painting has indeed been very great. The question, however, arises how far Bihar can claim credit for this. The best specimens extant of Maurya and Gupta sculpture and painting have for the present, been found more outside the limits of Bihar than within. Though the Maurya and Gupta rulers had their seats of government in Bihar, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which the different parts of their far-flung empire received their inspiration from the centre. The school of sculpture at Sārnāth or of painting at Ajantā may not owe much directly to Bihar. But there can be no doubt that indirectly both were under her obligation as it was the Mauryan and Gupta emperors and their patronage which created and promoted conditions for the development of art. The fact that the best specimens of sculpture, both of the Maurya and Gupta periods, have been found at Sārnāth would clearly indicate that that locality was a highly developed centre of art. The ruins of the Mauryan Darbar Hall with its characteristic polished pillars of Chunār stone at Kumhrār four miles from Patna, the similarly polished fragments of a couchant bull and a pillar found recently in the very heart of the

city, polished caves in the Bārabar Hills not far from Gaya, all point to the fact that art flourished in those days in the very centre of Magadha. It is difficult however to make a full assessment of Bihar's contribution to the development of art in ancient India, till we have further proofs in the matter.

In one specimen of Mauryan architecture however, the rock-cut caves, the earliest specimens (Bārabar caves) dating back to the days of Aśoka are found in Bihar, and the idea and technical method owe much to its people.

Pāla art was of a distinctly local character and Bihar, with Bengal to some extent can claim the credit for this post-Gupta phase of art which not only influenced the art of neighbouring regions, particularly Orissa and Nepal, but also that of distant Java. The magnificent ruins of Nālandā are fine examples of architecture and planning. They served as models to Tibet and China. The grace and refinement of Pāla sculpture and painting were a definite contribution by Bihar and Bengal to the art of India in its decadent stage.

The descriptions of Pāṭaliputra by the classical writers and Fa-Hien leave no doubt that it was one of the most magnificent cities, not only of ancient India, but even of the ancient world. The structure of this city and its municipal administration might well be said to have set up a new standard of city-life in India. This might be equally true of the social side of urban life. For, according to old commentators, the idealized picture of a 'nāgarika' (a city dweller) such as we find in Vātsyāyana's *Kāmasūtra*, is really the picture of a citizen of Pāṭaliputra.

The mighty and vital stream of Indian life and culture has been flowing on and on for the last few milleniums. Ancient Bihar had the privilege of giving its humble but early offerings to the gliding stream that is ever seeking a common and glorious destiny, in harmony with humanity.

XIII

POLITICAL HISTORY (1206-1526)

BIHAR made history in ancient times and enjoyed all-India importance for many centuries. Despite its antiquity and historical interest, however, it has had no comprehensive history of its own. Even the Muslims, who were so fond of chronicling events and who established themselves in this land as early as the 12th century have left no connected contemporary account. An unusual darkness veils that chapter of Bihar's history relating specially to the Turko-Afghan period. One reason for this is that Medieval Bihar had lost its old status and had very little independent history of its own. In fact, there were hardly any independent kingdoms in the region and seldom any assumption of independence.

We get neither coins nor inscriptions except in the case of the short-lived Nuhāni dynasty founded in Bihar by Daryā Khan Nuhāni. The Sūr régime was an all-Indian one in character, although the triumph of Sher Shah of Sasaram may be regarded as the triumph of Bihar. The history of Bihar in the early medieval period is largely a record of the struggle for supremacy between Delhi and Bengal and the control of Bihar whose fortune was very often linked with theirs. For about a century beginning from 1394, the kings of Jaunpur held sway over most parts of Bihar. Dr Qanungo, in his *History of Bengal*, very significantly remarks, 'Throughout the Middle Ages the same historical relation between Bengal and Bihar continued, Bihar always serving as the stepping-stone to the sovereignty of Bengal from the time of Muhammad Bakhtīyār to Ālivardi Khan and yet being regarded as a minor partner in the scheme of government.'

In the absence of written history, it is largely epigraphic evidence and mural records, in which Bihar at one time was so rich, supplemented by coins and incidental references in contemporary imperial chronicles and religious literature, that give a fairly correct idea of the

beginnings of Muslim rule in this province as well as of its changing relations with Delhi and with neighbouring provinces.

Bihar may very well have felt the zeal of Muslim missionaries and the weight of Muslim arms long before the conquest of Muhammad-bin-Bakhtīyār Khaljī. The discovery of the Maner (Maniāri) copper plate granted to a Brāhmaṇa of Pergana Maniāri and dated A.D. 1124, by the Gāhaḍvāla king Govindchandra of Kanauj mentioning the levy of the obligatory Turushka-daṇḍa or Turk's tax, the ascription of certain tombs to pre-Bakhtīyār personages, the cryptic references in Tārānāth's Tibetan works of Muslim settlers and others helping Bakhtīyār Khaljī, all are very significant and suggestive. Tradition also provides strong circumstantial evidence supporting earlier Muslim settlements in Bihar. According to one such tradition, a Muslim saint, Momin Arif, settled in the region of Maner. He came into conflict with the Hindu chief of the locality over his missionary work. His appeal for help was, however, answered by Imām Tāj Muhammad, also called 'Faqih', a great theologian of Jerusalem, who came with a band of volunteers and defeated and killed the chief of Maniāri. The chronogram 'Dīn-i-Muhammad Shud Qāwi' given by later writers commemorating this event has as its date 1180. The still prevailing annual festival associated with Ghāzī Miañ or Ma'sūd Salār, general of Mahmūd Ghaznāvī, lends support to his alleged lightning raids far into Eastern India. There is recorded evidence of his coming as far as Vārānasī. He is said to have been eventually killed by Raja Hardev or Śahdev in 1033.

MUHAMMAD-BIN-BAKHTĪYĀR KHALJĪ

The real conqueror of Bihar was Muhammad-bin-Bakhtīyār Khaljī a man of ungainly build and of humble lineage but nevertheless enterprising, bold, and sagacious. He sought entrance into the courts of Shāhāb-ud-dīn Ghūrī and Qutub-ud-dīn Aibak, but was unsuccessful through lack of influence and backing. For a short period, he served under the governor of Badāūn, and eventually joined the services of the governor of Oudh, Malik Husam-ud-dīn Aghul-bāk, about 1197. He was granted a jagir comprising the perganas of Bhuili and Bhagwat in the eastern parts of the modern Mirzapur district between the Ganges and the Karamnāsā. 'Being a man of valour and intrepidity he was in the habit of making incursions into the territory of Maner and Bihar.' It is significant that Maner, which is definitely mentioned by the earliest contemporary Muslim historian, was

chosen by Bakhtīyār Khaljī as his base of operations in Bihar. These sporadic raids provided him with ample booty and resources, and a large number of wandering tribesmen flocked to his standard. 'Sultan Qutub-ud-dīn also sent him a robe of honour.' All this paved the way for his bold and impetuous attack on the fortified University town (Hisar-i-Bihar) of Bihar in 1199. The very suddenness of the move carried the day for him. According to Minhāj, the author of *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri*, there were only 200 horsemen defending Kanoor.

The author of this work, the only authentic and contemporary Persian source, has given the following account of the attack on Bihar: 'There were two brothers of Farganah, men of learning, one Nizāmuddīn and the other Samsamuddīn in the service of Muhammad Bakhtīyār, and the author of this book met Samsamuddīn at Lakhnauti in 641 H. (1243 H.) and this account is from him. These two wise brothers were soldiers in that band of holy warriors. When they reached the gateway of the fortress and began the attack, Muhammad Bakhtīyār by the force of his intrepidity threw himself into the postern gateway of the place and the fortress was captured and great booty was acquired. A great number of the inhabitants of that place were Brāhmaṇas and all these had their heads shaven and they were slain. There were a great number of books. When these books were seen by Mussalmans, they summoned a number of people to give information regarding their contents; but all the Hindus had been killed. On being acquainted with the contents of these books it was found that the whole of that fortress and city was a place of learning and in the Hindu tongue they call it a Madrasa, Vihāra.' Figures given by Muslim writers of Hindus killed and property looted are often exaggerated in religious zeal. After this Muhammad went to Delhi with much booty from Bihar to pay his respects to Sultan Qutub-ud-dīn, who received him with great honour and distinction and commissioned him to extend Muslim influence further eastward.

There is some difference of opinion regarding the extent of Bakhtīyār's conquests in Bihar. Whereas it is generally admitted that he overran most of South Bihar, authorities are not unanimous as to the extent of his hold over North Bihar. Abdus Salām, the translator of *Riyāz-us-Salatin*, an 18th-century work on the history of Bengal, says that he 'appears to have conquered Mithilā (west of the river Mahānanda), Barendra (the tract between Karatoyā and the Mahānadi river), Rādhā (the tract south of the Ganges and west of the Hugli)

and the north-western portion of Bengal (the deltaic tract of the Ganges).' Blochmann, without however mentioning any authority, says that Bakhtīyār took possession of south-eastern Mithilā. Minhāj, the author of *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*, remains silent on this point. Dr Qanungo in his *History of Bengal* holds that Bakhtīyār's way to Bengal lay probably through Jharkhand. However, there is the very important testimony of Mullā Taqia of the 16th century, who tells us that Bakhtīyār also invaded Tirhut and made the ruler of the Karṇāṭa dynasty his vassal, before embarking on his lightning raid on Bengal in 1201-02. Mullā Taqia was an important personality who has been mentioned by Jahāngīr in his *Memoirs* and also by sixteenth-century writers like Nizām-ud-dīn and Badāūnī. In the preface to his *Bayāz* (Miscellaneous Collections) Mullā Taqia says that he travelled from Jaunpur to Bihar and Bengal, utilized the books in the library of Junnatabād, Gaur, and also consulted the documents of Nijabat Khan, son of Hashim Khan Nīshāpūri, who had received a jagir in Bihar. In the absence of any other contemporary evidence, the version of Mullā Taqia can be accepted, for he gives definite information, with dates, about Bakhtīyār's march into Tirhut. He also mentions the names of the Karṇāṭa rulers of Mithilā. In fact, his *Bayāz* is a very important source of information from which to reconstruct the history of North Bihar during this period. He himself must have utilized certain sources which are now lost.

Both the *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* and the *Riyāz-us-Salatin* refer to the administrative measures of Bakhtīyār. 'He brought the different parts of the territory under his sway and instituted therein, in every part, the reading of the Khutba and the coining of money and through his praiseworthy endeavours and those of his Amīrs, Masjids, colleges and monasteries were founded in those parts.' (T.N. Raverty's translation). The *Riyāz-us-Salatin* adds that he also set up military outposts.

The later events of his career, his attack on Northern India, the setting up of a capital at Devkoṭ, his bold and adventurous but at the same time unsuccessful expedition into Tibet, his return and death at Devkoṭ in 1206, may be mentioned briefly. According to Ferishta, his body was brought back to Bihar and was there buried. Local tradition, also recorded in a published Persian work, still points to a very big old solidly-built brick structure in Mohalla Imadpur in Biharsharif as the eternal resting place of the founder of the Muslim power in Eastern India. Unfortunately, the inscriptional stone was lost long ago, although the place can still be marked.

The death of Bakhtīyār was followed by a struggle for power between the military fief-holders of the Khaljī oligarchy. One of them, Malik Izz-ud-dīn Muhammad Shiran, emerged victorious and imprisoned his rival, Ālī Mardān. But Ālī escaped from the custody of the Kotwal of Narkoti, went to Delhi, and induced Sultan Qutub-ud-dīn to order Qaemaz Rumi from Oudh to go to Bengal 'to settle the affairs of Khaljī's Amīrs.' Qaemaz was welcomed by Husam-ud-dīn Iwaz, the feudatory of Gaṅgautri, which lay on the road to Bihar, and which was probably an outpost of the Bihar headquarters. 'Bihar,' says Dr Qanungo, 'seemed to have passed silently under the sphere of Sultan Qutub-ud-dīn's authority.'

Malik Shiran was defeated and killed at the end of 1207, and the chief of the Gaṅgautri outpost assumed charge of Bihar and Bengal as the viceroy of Delhi. But the wily Ālī Mardān managed to secure the viceroyalty for himself. He was received on the bank of the Kosi river by Husam-ud-dīn Iwaz, who conducted him to Devkoṭ, the capital of Bengal, in 1209-10. Ālī Mardān, after the death of Qutub-ud-dīn in 1210, asserted his independence under the title of Alā-ud-dīn, but his cruelty and vindictiveness soon caused a popular rising of the Khaljīs which ended his disturbed régime of 'two years more or less' and he was succeeded by Malik Husam-ud-dīn, the fittest and ablest of the Khaljīs. He at first ruled as governor and then, probably in 1216, assumed independence and the title and name Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn. Numismatic evidence shows that he was recognized by, and received investiture from, the Caliph of Baghdād a few years before Iltutmish got the same religious sanction to his rule. His earliest known coin, dated 1219, bears the legend 'Sultan-ul-Muazzam' and 'Nāsir Amīr-ul-Momenin', i.e. the Caliph. Iwaz, a compatriot of Bakhtīyār, hailed from the same region of Garmsir.

There is recorded evidence of his extorting tribute from the neighbouring regions such as Bang, Kamrup, Jājnagar and Tirhut. The all-India political situation of the times helped his designs. Sultan Iltutmish left him undisturbed for many years for he himself was preoccupied with more urgent matters elsewhere. According to Mullā Taqia, Narsiṁha Deva of Simrāon continued to pay the agreed tribute to Bengal up to the time of Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn. However, Sultan Iltutmish, after consolidating his position on the imperial throne, turned his attention to the Eastern provinces. Minhāj-us-Sirāj says that 'the august Sultan on several occasions sent

forces from the capital, Delhi, towards Lakhnauti, until he appeared personally in 1225 with an Imperial army, wrested Bihar, and installed his own "Amīrs" there.' His victory against Husam-ud-dīn Iwaz was, however, brief and superficial. A treaty was concluded by which Husam-ud-dīn paid a large indemnity and acknowledged the suzerainty of Delhi. Izz-ul-mulk Alā-ud-dīn Jānī, a Shahzada of Turkistan was put in charge of the separate domain of Bihar. But soon after the Emperor's withdrawal Iwaz came back, ousted the Imperial nominee and with the help, according to Mullā Taqia, of Narsiṁha Deva of Tirhut, occupied Bihar for a space of two years. Iwaz was also engaged in expanding his power further east in the Bang region. His temporary absence was utilized by Alā-ud-dīn Jānī, the dispossessed governor of Bihar who, with Prince Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd, the eldest son of Iltutmish, and the governor of Oudh, appeared before the Bengal capital. Iwaz quickly returned from his eastern campaign, but the situation had turned against him in his absence. He was defeated in a pitched battle, captured and beheaded in 1227. According to Minhāj-us-Sirāj his independent rule lasted for twelve years.

Iwaz had annexed South Bihar and extended his frontiers up to the mouth of the Gandak in North Bihar. His hold over Bihar was, however, weak and more a military occupation than a consolidated and well-established rule. The neighbouring Hindu regions still had powerful Hindu Rajas who, although militarily overpowered, had not been thoroughly subdued.

Prince Nāsir-ud-dīn amalgamated Oudh, Bihar and Bengal and established his capital at Lakhnauti. In 1229 his father gave him the title of Malik-us-Sharq (Lord of the East) and also sent him a robe of honour. The prince, however, died in the same year. His death was followed by the rise of Malik Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Balka, a close relation to Husam-ud-dīn Iwaz, who once again restored Bengal's independence. Sultan Iltutmish personally led another expedition into Bengal and defeated Balka. Alā-ud-dīn Jānī, the former governor of Bihar, was transferred to Lakhnauti and the vacant governorship given to Malik Saif-ud-dīn Aibak. Alā-ud-dīn, however, was soon afterwards removed from the governorship of Lakhnauti and replaced by Saif-ud-dīn Āibak, the governor of Bihar, who in his turn was replaced by the last Shamsi governor of Bihar, Tughril Tughān in 1232.

It is thus evident from the repeated expeditions of Iltutmish that

he was determined upon detaching Bihar from Bengal and constituting it as a separate province of his empire. It is significant that in the list of conquered regions of Iltutmish, Minhāj included Tirhut and Darbhanga, besides Bihar.

Following the death of Iltutmish (1236) a number of governors ruled Bihar and Bengal. The lure of the governorship of Lakhnauti, which still retained its traditional semi-independent status, was still very great and governors of other regions such as Oudh and Karā-Manikpur often fought for it. The times were full of their petty bickerings and strifes, which the Imperial court under Iltutmish's weak successors could scarcely control.

TUGHRIL TUGHĀN (1232-44)

Malik Izz-ud-dīn Abdul Fatah Tughril Tughān was a Qara-Khatai Turk, 'graced with many virtues and noble qualities.' A former slave of Iltutmish who had served the Sultan in various capacities, as Saqi-Khas (personal cup-bearer) and Sahi-Dawat-Dar (keeper of the Imperial writing-case), he was appointed as feudatory of Badāūn and, on the transfer of Saif-ud-dīn Āibak to Bengal, was made governor of Bihar. His term of governorship is very important, for later on, when he acquired the territory of Lakhnauti on the death of its governor, Malik Saif-ud-dīn Yughantat in 1233-34, he managed to keep Bihar as well. Thus Bihar, which had been constituted into a separate governorship, lost its identity again for some years to come. During the reign of Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd (1246-65), says Blochmann, both the provinces seem to have been ruled by the same feudatories.

Tughril Tughān enjoyed a comparatively long lease of power from 1230-44. He kept aloof from the cross-currents of Imperial court politics and acknowledged the authority of whoever happened to be on the Imperial throne at the time. He kept the Delhi rulers in good humour by sending suitable gifts and presents. He secured legal recognition of his status as ruler of Bengal and Bihar from both Sultana Razia and Bahrām Shah. Sultan Alā-ud-dīn Masūd, son of Fīrūz Shah, conferred upon him the insignia of royalty, and the 'charter' and the red canopy. While scrupulously maintaining good relations with the Imperial court, Tughril Tughān expanded his own territories. He made successful raids into Tirhut. According to Mullā Taqia, Narsiṁha Deva of Tirhut had shown signs of defiance during the weak reigns of Sultana Raẓia and Tughril Tughān,

Tughril therefore attacked Tirhut and took captive its ruler, who was at first sent to Lakhnauti, but was later reinstated at Darbhanga. He also crossed swords with the ruler of Orissa and extended his rule as far as Manikpur in the west. In fact he had dreams of carving out for himself an independent kingdom in Eastern India. His inscription, dated July 1242, is important evidence in this connexion and is one of the most beautiful specimens of the ornamental Naskh style of writing. It was caused to be written by one Mubārak-al-Khāzin (Treasurer) on a building other than the Bari Dargah, the abode of the greatest Sūfī saint of Bihar, H. Sharf-ud-dīn.

Tughril's expedition to Orissa had disastrous results and the Oriyas are said to have pursued him 'up to the doors of Lakhnauti' in 1244. He sought Imperial aid and Sultan Alā-ud-dīn Masūd Shah sent Malik Qamar-ud-dīn Tamar Khan Qeeran, the governor of Oudh, to assist him. Tamar Khan, instead of siding with his compatriot in distress, had his eye on the governorship of Bengal, and finally ousted Tughril Tughān. The Imperial court was too weak to punish the usurper who, after a brief rule, died at the end of 1246. Tughril Tughān himself also died at about the same time. *Malik Jalāl-ud-dīn Masūd Jānī was then appointed governor of* Bihar and Bengal, and ruled for four years (1247-51).

Malik Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Yuzbak Tughril Khan, the governor of Oudh, succeeded Masūd Jānī in 1251. He assumed the royal title of Sultan Mughis-ud-dīn and had a chequered and aggressive career for some years during which he did much to expand his dominions. After his death in 1257, Bihar, and probably Bengal too, reverted to allegiance to Delhi under Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn for, in 1258, when India was threatened by the Mongol ruler Halaku, the trusted official Jalāl-ud-dīn Masūd Jānī became governor of Bengal. The period is itself rather dark and confusing, not much information being available. Minhāj mentions one Malik Arsalan Khan Sanjar, who may be placed among the governors of Bengal. During the reign of Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmud he was given the fief of Bianah, and he was also governor, first of Oudh, and later of Karah. It was in 1259, during the absence of Izz-ud-dīn Balban, the governor of Lakhnauti, campaigning in the East, that Arsalan Khan suddenly appeared before the capital of Lakhnauti, and took the city by storm. The *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*, the only primary Persian source of information for this period, comes to an end at this point and there are no written chronicles or numismatic evidence regarding Arsalan Khan Sanjar's relations

with Delhi. But Arsalan Khan did hold independent sway over Bihar and Lakhnauti during the feeble rule of Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd.

An important Arabic inscription, the Barahdari inscription of Biharsharif, dated 1265, mentions Tartar Khan as governor of Bihar. He sent 63 elephants as a present to Balban when he ascended the throne, but probably he also made himself somewhat independent of the Delhi Śultanate.

After the death of Sher Khan, the successor of Tātār Khan, Amīn Khan was appointed governor of Bengal (1276) in addition to his own governorship of Oudh. An additional post of Naib-Governor was also created and Tughril Khan appointed to it. This Tughril 'the Falcon', who won much booty by overrunning Jājnagar, felt himself sufficiently powerful to defy the emperor, the more so when Balban was ill and his son was engaged with the Moghals. He was successful against two expeditionary forces sent against him. Balban personally waged relentless campaigns against the rebel and finally defeated and ruthlessly punished him.

THE BALBANI DYNASTY OF BENGAL

The defeat and death of Tughril at the hands of Balban and the appointment of his second son, Nāsir-ud-dīn Bughrā Khan, with due honours, to the newly conquered province in 1282-83, marks the opening of a new chapter in the history of Bengal and Bihar. Bughrā Khan preferred the distant viceroyalty of Bengal to succession to the Imperial throne, with the result that on the death of Balban (1287), Qaiqubad, the eldest son of Bughrā Khan, succeeded to the throne of Delhi. Soon after, Bughrā Khan assumed the royal title of Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd (Śept. 1267). The estrangement between the father and the son, the march of Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn to the west to admonish his young and wayward offspring and their meeting have been immortalized by Amīr Khusru in the *Qiran-us-Saladain*. A compromise followed the meeting on the bank of the Saraju river in Saran. Nāsir-ud-dīn returned to Bengal in 1288, retained the province of Bihar, and appointed Fīrūz Aitigin its governor. The independent Bengal kingdom, was roughly divided into four big governorships, Bihar, Sātagāon, Bang, and Devkoṭ; and these four governors were constantly trying to oust one another unless the Bengal king was strong enough to hold the balance.

Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn was succeeded by his son, Rukn-ud-dīn

Kaika-us (1291-1301). There is nothing on record to show that he acknowledged the supremacy of Emperor Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī. Alā-ud-dīn, while still a prince, had contemplated an attack on Lakhnauti, but had ultimately gone southward and sacked Devgiri. Fortunately we have definite inscriptional evidence to indicate that Bihar was under the rule of Rukn-ud-dīn Kaika-us for at least eight years, if not more. The first inscription of Rukn-ud-dīn Kaika-us is the Mahādvara inscription, dated 1293, recording the construction of a fort (Hisn-i-Haseen) probably on the banks of a river in the Begusarai district. The second, dated 1297, found at Lakhisarai, and called by Blochmann the Kagol inscription, records the erection of a Juma Masjid in 1297 by 'Zia-ud-Daulat Waddin Ulugh Khan', the Deputy of the great Khan 'Ikhtiyarul-Haq Waddin Firoz Aitigin' the governor of Bihar. These two inscriptions, both written in Tughra and executed by the same hand and bearing the same names, are very important, for they show that Bihar enjoyed once again a separate independent status, and that Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn and Zia-ud-Daulat were respectively the governor and deputy governor of Bihar, both north and south of the Ganges. Instead of mentioning the name of the reigning Delhi sovereign, Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, they record the allegiance of Bihar to Rukn-ud-dīn Kaika-us of Bengal, designated 'the king of kings of Turks and Persians', 'the helper of the prince of the faithful'. This assumption of such titles as 'the exalted Khaqan', 'the Lord of East and China' and 'Alexander the Second' by the governor of Bihar shows the attitude of the rulers of the Balbani dynasty towards Khaljī imperialism. Rukn-ud-dīn Kaika-us was succeeded by Sultan Shams-ud-dīn Fīrūz (1301-22).

Fortunately we have quite a few inscriptional records to throw light on the state of affairs in Bihar during the first three decades of the 14th century. Shams-ud-dīn Fīrūz appointed the last but one of his six sons, Hatim Khan, governor of Bihar. We have two inscriptions of Hatim Khan dated 1309 and 1315 respectively. These inscriptions in Arabic, are good specimens of the artistic combination of the Naskh and the Tughra styles. The first, dated 1309, was unknown till the seventies of the 19th century when Blochmann discovered it. The second, in a similar style of writing and mentioning Sultan Shams-ud-dīn Fīrūz and his son Hatim Khan 'the just and benevolent governor of Bihar', is still extant on a big black basalt stone lying against the northern wall of the Choti Dargah of H. Badr-i-Ālam, in Biharsharif. Blochmann, on the basis of these two inscriptions,

observed that in 1309 and 1315 and also during the intervening years Hatim Khan was governor of Bihar.

Hatim Khan and one of his elder brothers, Bahādur Shah, have been mentioned by H. Ahmad Sharf-ud-dīn, the 14th century saint, in a rare Malfuz, *Munis-ul-Muridin*, compiled (1354) by a disciple of his. When questioned in a Majlis about the requisite qualifications of a ruler, the saint said that King Shams-ud-dīn of Sonārgam once asked his Vizir Arsalan Khan which of his two sons, Hatim and Bahādur, the rulers of Bihar and Kamrup (Assam) respectively were worthy of kingship. The Vizir respectfully declared both of them to be unfit, the one because of his excessively mild and generous temperament and his lack of majestic awe and severity, and the other because of his haughty and overbearing nature and want of kindness and affability. A well-proportioned combination of both was needed for the kingly office. After the death of Shams-ud-dīn Fīrūz 'both the sons fell from power and dominion.' This shows that Hatim Khan survived his father, whose coins terminate in 1321, marking perhaps his death and the end of his reign.

It is significant that all these inscriptions mention Bengal Sultans and not the Emperor Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, their contemporary. The connexion of Bihar with Lakhnauti Bengal, however, was definitely replaced by a connexion with Imperial Delhi under the Tughluqs, who appear to have paid much attention to this part of their realm.

THE TUGHLUQS

Bihar once again witnessed the march of Imperial forces on their way to subjugate Bengal, during the reign of Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq, the founder of the dynasty. Bahādur Shah, the brother of Hatim Khan, had rebelled several times during the reign of his father. Provoked by his rebellions, Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq marched on Bengal in 1324-25 by way of Bihar, and on his return from Bengal, conquered Tirhut, then under Harisiṁha Deva. He also demolished the stronghold of the Karṇāṭak dynasty of Simrāon for having aided Bahādur Shah. He established a mint-town at Tirhut which was sometimes called 'Tughluqābād-urf-Tirhut'.

There is ample evidence, both inscriptional and numismatic, of the hold of Muhammad Shah Tughluq on Bihar. These sources are further corroborated by the accounts of Mullā Taqia. Among the inscriptions, the most important is the Sukunat (residence) inscription at Biharsharif, dated 1332. There is also the Bediban

inscription in the Motihari district. It has now been deciphered and is dated 1346. It records the erection of a Muslim shrine (or 'well', according to another reading) during the reign of Muhammad Shah Tughluq.

The *Malfuzat* of the patron saint of Bihar, H. Sharf-ud-dīn and another entitled *Manaqib-ul-Asfia* of his cousin Shaikh Ashoaib, mention Zain-ud-dīn Majd-ul-Mulk as the Muqti (fief-holder) or governor of Bihar. The latter also mentions that Muhammad Tughluq sent by Majd-ul-Mulk a Bulgarian carpet for the saint and had also ordered him to set aside a jagir from Rajgir for the maintenance of Khānqah. The mention of the Bulgarian carpet indicates the existence of an import trade with Bulgaria. The reference is crroborated by Mullā Taqia, who has given much important information about Tirhut during the reign of Muhmmad Tughluq. He mentions the erection of a fort and a congregational mosque at Darbhanga by Muhammad Tughluq. The mosque no longer exists but an inscription bearing the date 1326 was seen intact in the central arch by Mullā Taqia in the 16th century, and he has given us its text. It records the erection of a Juma Masjid during the reign of 'Muhammad, son of the good Sultan, the martyr Ghāzi Ghiyās-ud-dīn,' and so on.

Among the coins issued by Muhammad Tughluq with the mint-name of Tirhut-urf-Tughluqābād, one is dated 1330-31. All this evidence conclusively proves that North Bihar was subject to the Delhi Sultans and that its Rajas were tributaries. As for South Bihar, it remained in the undisputed possession of the representatives of the Delhi Sultanate even when Hājī Ilyās of Bengal was in the hey-day of his power. This is apparent from the various inscriptions of Muhammad Tughluq and the many more of his cousin and successor, Fīrūz Shah Tughluq.

All of the contemporary historians mention the march of Fīrūz Tughluq's army through Bihar on his expeditions to Bengal and Orissa. Sultan Shams-ud-dīn of Bengal, popularly known as Hājī Ilyās, the reputed founder of the two important cities of North Bihar, Hajipur and Shams-ud-dīnpur (Samastipur), extended his conquests to Tirhut and Champaran, whence he led an expedition to Nepal. He even went as far as Vārānasi, Gorakhpur and Bahraich in Uttar Pradesh. This provoked the resentment of Sultan Fīrūz Tughluq, who marched through Gorakhpur, Kharosa and Jagat, crossed the Kosi (1352), drove Ilyās from Tirhut, and forced him, after the siege of

Ekdala, to acknowledge his sovereignty. According to Mullā Taqia, Kameshwar Thākur, founder of the Oinwar dynasty of Sugāon, who had been ousted by Ilyās, was reinstated in Tirhut and Muslim officers were appointed for the propagation and observance of Muslim law. According to another version, Bhogeshwar, and not his father Kameshwar, was preferred and favoured by the Sultan. Fīrūz Tughluq had to march again (1358) via Tirhut to reduce Sikandar Shah, the son and successor of Hājī Ilyās, and returning to Jaunpur, once again marched through Bihar to Orissa. Historians refer to Fīrūz Tughluq's several visits to Tirhut, the whole of which was once again brought under subjection.

There are further corroborative references in the religious literature of the 14th and 15th centuries to events and personages in Bihar during the reign of Fīrūz Tughluq. Several important officers are mentioned who were all very devoted to H. Sharf-ud-dīn, the Saint of Bihar. According to the *Rafiq-ul-Arifean*, a Malfuz of the 15th century saint Husam-ud-dīn Manikpuri, Fīrūz Shah paid his respects to H. Sharf-ud-dīn and asked his blessings for victory. He also offered prayers. The *Muktubat* (Epistles) of the Bihar saint contain some letters of reply addressed to the Sultan. The author of the rare work, *Serat-i Fīrūz Shāhi* gives valuable information about Fīrūz Tughluq. He is mentioned as having called on the celebrated 14th century saint of Bihar, H. Ahmad Chiramposh, first cousin of H. Sharf-ud-dīn, and having a talk with him on the duties of a sovereign towards his subjects.

Judging from the large number of his inscriptions still existing, Sultan Fīrūz Tughluq appears to have been very popular in Bihar. The earliest are three in number, all dated 1353 and belonging to the shrine of Malik Ibrāhīm Bayu, on Biharsharif Hill. One of these inscriptions mentions Fīrūz Tughluq, and another Malik Bayu as 'pivot of the realm' and as the Muqti of Bihar. Next in chronological order is another set of three inscriptions, one at Kako (Jahānābād, in Gaya district) and two at Biharsharif, dated 1359. Local tradition, supported by inscriptional evidence, indicates that Fīrūz Tughluq paid a visit to Kako while on his way to Bihar. There is an interesting Sanskrit inscription in a Jaina temple at Rajgir, recording the name of Sultan Fīrūz Tughluq, 'the protector of the good, and of 'Malik Bayu' and his 'Sahayak' or assistant 'Shahana Sardrud-dīn' respectively which is also important and worthy of notice.

There is thus ample evidence, inscriptional and otherwise, to show that the whole of Bihar, North and South, was detached from Bengal and placed under Imperial officers. There are some three or four inscriptions of the reign of Fīrūz's successors, Muhammad Shah and Mahmūd Shah, his son and grandson, respectively. One inscription (1390) of Muhammad Shah's reign once belonged to a now ruined mosque in Biharsharif. Another (1396) still stands in the Choti Takia, Biharsharif. These inscriptions indicate that Bihar remained loyal to Delhi even under the later Tughluqs, when civil war and provincial insubordination were rampant.

THE SHARQI KINGS OF JAUNPUR

The beginning of the Sharqi hold on Bihar can be traced back to 1394 when Mahmūd Tughluq sent Malik Sarwar Khwāja Jahān, also called Malik-us-Sharq, to rule over the territory from Kanauj to Bihar. He subjugated and ruled over Tirhut and South Bihar, and the 'Rāi of Jaynagar' and the king of Lakhnauti sent elephants as tribute to him at Delhi. Bodhraj of Bikaner gives interesting details of 'Khwāja Sarwar's' expedition to Bihar in 1394. He describes the clash between his soldiers and the Ujjainis of Shahabad at 'Chausghat' which resulted in the sack of Bhojpur, the defeat and death of 'Maharaj Har Raj' and the flight of 'Maharaj Kumār Gajraj' and Devaraj. This historian of the Parmars credits the vanquished Ujjainis with having continued guerilla warfare from the hills and jungles for years till the death of Khawāja Jahān in 1399, when 'M. Gajraj', the Ujjain ruler, returned from the hills and reoccupied Kuroor. It was his younger brother and successor, Jagdeo, who provoked the next important expedition to South Bihar by the third and the greatest Sharqi ruler Ibrāhīm Shah who, like his father, had assumed the insignia of royalty. Ibrāhīm Sharqi sent a force which reoccupied Kuroor in 1416. Gajraj and Jagdeo were again sent into the wilderness, but continued to harass the 'Yavans'. Sangrām Dev, the next ruler, was a powerful man who vowed to keep the guerilla war going in 'Rohan', and did so for twelve years till the death of Ibrāhīm, after which the Ujjainis regained Bhojpur and made Dawa their seat of Government.

There is enough inscriptional evidence from 1482 to 1486 of the Sharqi hold on Bihar. Dated copper coins are also available in Rajgir and elsewhere. An unpublished inscription of Sultan Ibrāhīm Sharqi, found in a mosque in Darbhanga, was intact when Mullā Taqia

saw it and recorded its text in the 16th century. It was dated 1402, the year Ibrāhīm marched on Bengal.

Three versified inscriptions of the reign of Ibrāhīm's successor, Mahmūd Shah, have been observed by Blochmann. The first dated 1443, belonged to the Juma mosque constructed by Syed Ajmal. It is important inasmuch that it mentions the name of the then Muqti of Bihar, Nāsir ibn Baha. The other two are both dated 1455. Of these, the Pahārpur Juma mosque inscription, engraved by H. Ahmad Balkhi Langar Daryā in 1455, is still intact, while the other, some lines of which, left out by Blochmann, have now been deciphered, also belonged to a congregational mosque built in the same year. MahmudShah MahmudSharqi's copper coins found in Rajgir and Orissa, and his expedition to Jaynagar in Tirhut, also deserve notice.

The last Sharqi king of Jaunpur, Sultan Husain Shah, is represented by a rare unpublished inscription which is very difficult to decipher. It records the erection of a green vaulted building. The date of the inscription, 1486, marks the second of the eleven years of Husain Shah's reign in Bihar. Soon after his accession in 1459, he made a truce for four years with Bahlol Lodī, and invaded Tirhut and Orissa, laying waste the territories and exacting tribute. His coins have been found both in Bihar and Orissa. His other preoccupations and his constant struggle against the Delhi rulers, prevented him from fighting the Ujjainis of Shahabad. It seems that he was generally popular with the Hindus. His repeated efforts to win back his lost territories, including Bihar, from the first two Lodī Emperors, Bahlol and Sikandar, will be dealt with in detail in subsequent pages.

The political stituation of the eastern provinces during this period was somewhat complicated and confused. Bengal was once again eclipsing Bihar, with Bhagalpur acknowledging the rule of Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd (1442-59) of the later Ilyās Shāhī dynasty of Bengal. According to Mullā Taqia, his son and successor, Rukn-ud-dīn Barbak Shah (1459-74), had regained parts of Tirhut in 1470. Barbak Shah revived the previous arrangement of the famous Ilyās Shah, and split the region into two. He joined one portion to Bengal with Hajipur as its centre and appointed a Naib (Deputy), Kedār Rāi, to collect tribute. The other portion north of the Gandak was left to the charge of Raja Dhir Singh, brother of Raja Bhairab Singh. He, however, overpowered the Bengal king's Naib, but was attacked by Barbak Shah who forced him to submit.

The last of the three Habshi kings of Bengal, Sīdī Badr Dīwāna, held sway over a part of Bihar, including Champanagar in Bhagalpur. This is evident from a very beautiful unpublished inscription in the Tughra style recording the erection of a mosque in 1491 by Mutabar Khan during the reign of Muzaffar Shah. His vizier, the great and good Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shah, who replaced his master, has left numerous inscriptions, including six in Bihar. These inscriptions prove that the Abyssinians who ruled Bengal also ruled over a part of Bihar, and that their successor, Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shah, regained control of South Bihar and the trans-Gangetic area of North Bihar, probably after Sikandar Lodī's withdrawal from the east. An undated inscriptional stone on a mosque built by Nāsir or Nusrat Shah, son of Husain Shah from Begusarai, has recently been brought to the Patna Museum. It seems he had conquered North Bihar and placed it in the charge of his brother-in-law Makhdūm Ālam and Alā-ud-dīn. Makhdūm Ālam also held the fortress of Hajipur as a fief. Later on, he revolted and befriended Sher Shah Sūr.

THE LODĪ KINGS

This period represents a stage in the history of Bihar which is marked by many significant developments. Bihar at this time played an important part in the history of Hindustan. The period witnessed the futile attempts of Sultan Husain Shah Sharqi to recover his lost kingdom and the spirited action of Sikandar Lodī in restoring Delhi suzerainty over this part of the country and making the Raja of Tirhut a tributary once again. There were large colonies of Muslims both north and south of the Ganges, remains of which can still be seen in the ruins of houses and in the inscriptional stones of buildings now extinct. But by far the most remarkable and distinctive feature of the period was the rise of the Afghan confederacy in Eastern India, headed at first by the Nuhānīs who, for a short time, succeeded in establishing a kingdom stretching from Bihar to Kanauj. Later on the Sūrs led by Farīd Khan, a protégé of the Nuhānīs, made their presence felt and ultimately established an all-India empire. The history of Bihar is connected with the last phase of the Sharqi-Lodī struggle. The Sharqi kingdom, virtually founded in 1394, fell before Bahlul Lodī, the founder of the dynasty, in about 1484, the last year of Husain's Jaunpur inscriptions. Jaunpur, the capital of the Sharqi kingdom, was occupied and placed in the charge of Mubārak Khan Nuhānī, father of the famous Daryā Khan Nuhānī. Husain Shah,

in a futile attempt in 1486 to recover his domain, drove Mubarak Khan from Jaunpur to Majhowlie on the Gandak. This brought Bahlul Lodī once again from the West and he drove Husain Shah into the confines of Bihar. Barbak Shah, the eldest son of Bahlul Lodī, was made ruler of a separate Jaunpur kingdom in 1486. However, the territories on the southern side of the Ganges, including Chunar, Cherand, and Bihar, were not interfered with and remained under Husain Shah.

Sikandar Lodī, the second son of Bahlul, ascended the Imperial throne in 1488, after worsting his brother, Barbak Shah of Jaunpur, in the struggle for succession. Barbak Shah was, however, restored to his kingdom of Jaunpur, but Husain Shah remained a force in Bihar and soon after, trouble broke out again in Jaunpur. Barbak was a weak and incapable ruler who was ousted again and again by the local Zamindars in favour of Husain Shah. Eventually in 1493 Barbak was not spared but was arrested and put in chains and the separate kingdom of Jaunpur was dissolved and annexed to Delhi. Jamal Khan Sārangkhani, the first patron of the future Sher Shah, was put in charge of Jaunpur.

In 1494 Sultan Husain Shah, the ex-ruler of Jaunpur raised an army in Bihar and made one more attempt to defeat Sikandar Lodī, but was himself defeated and had to flee to Biharsharif. Sikandar followed him to Bihar with a vast army and did away with Sharqi rule. Husain, leaving Bihar in the charge of Malik Kandoo, fled to Kahalgāon, where he was courteously received by the Bengal king with whom he made matrimonial alliances. At a place called Deobar, eleven miles north-east of Bihar the Emperor detached a force from the main army, which drove out Malik Kandoo. The province of Bihar was annexed to Delhi in 1495.

Mahābat Khan along with several other Omarahs, was left in charge of the Bihar fortress while the Emperor himself returned to his camp at Darveshpur, near Maner. There are several villages in the Patna district which bear this name, but the camp of Sikandar Lodī appears to have been at Darveshpur Diara, contiguous to Maner, although Darveshpur Altamgha, in the Barh thana, would have been more suitable for embarking on the Tirhut expedition which the Emperor undertook immediately afterwards. The Raja of Tirhut came and submitted to his authority and offered presents and several lakhs of 'tankas' (coins) as tribute. The Sultan left Mubārak Khan Nuhānī to receive this tribute and himself returned to Darveshpur.

From there he went to Biharsharif to pay his respects at the tomb of the saint, H. Sharf-ud-dīn, and to distribute money among the faqirs and paupers there. He returned to Patna in 1495.

The Imperial forces were re-organized for the Bengal expedition. Sultan Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shah, the famous king of Bengal, sent an army under his son, Dānyāl, to check the advance of the Imperialists from Qutlughpur. It is difficult to ascertain the exact site of this place, but there is a village called Kutlupur, 4 miles south-east of Maner. However, things did not come to a head and a treaty, subsequently ratified by the two Sultans, was signed at Barh, whereby in addition to mutual pledges of non-aggression against their respective but unspecified frontiers, the Bengal ruler promised not to harbour enemies of the Empire. This provision was primarily meant for Husain Shah Sharqi who, secure under the shelter and patronage of the Bengal kings, was a constant source of trouble to the Lodī Emperor. On his return, Mubārak Khan Nuhānī died at Patna and the government of Bihar passed into the hands of his famous son, Daryā Khan. An inscriptional stone has recently been found at Biharsharif, recording the erection of an Eastern gate by Hājī Khan in 1495, after the conquest of Bihar by Sikandar Lodī and at the time of Wazīr-ul-Mulk Daryā Khān. Acute famine faced the people of Bihar and the occupation army of Sikandar Lodī. The Emperor therefore abolished the transit duties on grains, and this remained in force till the time of Akbar.

Some time after this, the Emperor set out for Saran, 'a dependency of Bihar' and after dispossessing the Hindu Zamindars of some of the perganas there, assigned his own Amīrs to jāgīrs. It has been supposed that Saran was an unconquered territory and remained the undisputed possession of the Hindu Zamindārs till the final reduction of the country by Sikandar Lodī. However, the discovery of two Arabic inscriptions at Narhan, one recording the erection of a congregational mosque by Alā-ud-dīn and the other belonging to a mausoleum constructed in 1500 suggest the existence of a large Muslim population in that region. Cherand in Chapra, where a Masjid was constructed in 1503 by Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shah of Bengal, had Muslim Sūfīs and scholars in later Tughluq times, as we find from a reference in the Malfuz of a Balkhi saint. The district certainly formed part of the Sharqi Husain Shah's dominions, otherwise he would not have sent the dispossessed governor of Sambhal, Mubārak Khan, to be imprisoned at Saran. A more effective Muslim hold on Saran and

Champaran was, however, established under the Lodīs. Among the 53 Omarahs of Sikandar Lodī, historians include the name of Husain Khan Formulī, 'Nāib of Saran'. Rizqullah Mushtaqi, the author of the *Wāqiāt-e-Mushtaqi,* tells us that Husain Formulī, Jāgīrdār of Saran and Champaran, crossed the river Gandak and surprised the Raja of Champaran in his fort on the other side of the river. However, the growing power and prestige of Husain Formulī, aroused the suspicion of Sikandar Lodī, who sent a force under Hājī Sarung, in 1509, to capture the governor of Saran. Husain Formulī, however, scenting the impending danger, fled to seek refuge with Ālā-ud-dīn Husain Shah of Bengal.

Another of the chief nobles of Sikandar Lodī was Masnad Ālī Daryā Khan Nuhānī, the Muqti of Bihar. Rizqullah Mushtaqi gives us an account of what appears to be a determined effort on the part of Husain Shah Sharqi, to win back Bihar. Daryā Khan, the governor, however, successfully held his own 'for two months' thus thwarting the designs of Husain Shah Sharqi.

Matters grew worse under Ibrāhīm Lodī, the son and successor of Sikandar Lodī. His conception of absolute sovereignty, added to his haughty, suspicious and cruel nature led him to treat the arrogant and independence-loving Afghan chiefs of other tribes as inferior. Each successive report of Ibrāhīm Lodī's malice, injustice and folly produced the same effect in the East as the alarming reports of Dilāwar Khan to his father Daulat Khan did in the West. The Nuhānīs and others rallied round Daryā Khan, the Governor of Bihar (1495 – 1522). They fought bravely for Ibrāhīm against his enemies, but finally, disgusted with his dealings, threw off his yoke. He was still deliberating over future plans when death overtook him.

Rizqullah Mushtaqi gives us some new and useful information about Bahar Khan, the son and successor of Daryā Khan, who after asserting his independence and establishing the short-lived Nuhānī dynasty in Bihar, perhaps also contemplated making a bid for Delhi sovereignty. We have said that the Omarahs who fled from Ibrāhīm's court at Agra, gathered around Bahar Khan (also called Śhāhbaz Khan) who soon had a force of a lakh under him. Bahar Khan proclaimed himself Sultan Muhammad and brought the whole country from Bihar to Sambhal under his rule. Sultan Ibrāhīm deputed a force commanded by some of the leading Afghan chiefs to punish the refractory eastern Afghans. Bābar, a

first class authority, gives some indication of the state of affairs at that time in his *Memoirs*. He wrote: Kanauj with the whole country beyond the Ganges was entirely in the possession of the refractory Afghans such as Nāsir Khan Lohānī Formulī, and a number of Amīrs who had been in a state of open rebellion for two or three years before the death of Ibrāhīm. They elected Bahar Khan, the son of Daryā Khan, as their king and gave him the name of Sultan Muhammad. Bābar is in practically full agreement with Rizqullah in his account of the expedition sent by Ibrāhīm against the 'lords of the Purab' (East).

Whereas the reading of the 'khutba' in Sultān Muhammad's name and the issuing of coins by him is mentioned by all authorities, only Rizqullah gives us definite information of the duration. According to him the 'khutba' was read in Sultan Muhammad's name for two years and some months. Ferishta and Nizām-ud-dīn limit the reading of the 'khutba' to the territory of Bihar and its dependencies. According to Bābar, however, as quoted above, the whole country from Kanauj and beyond the Ganges was under Afghan chiefs. It is significant that Bābar received a letter from 'Jalāl Khan, son of Bahar Khān Behari', in April 1529, which implies that Sultan Muhammad had already died some time before. The early career of Sher Khan under the patronage of the Nuhānīs whom he later supplanted, his ultimate emergence as the Emperor of India, and the establishment of the Sūr dynasty, form one of the most stirring and glorious chapters of the chequered history of Bihar, and their beginnings can be very well traced back to this period.

B. Administration—Central, Provincial and Rural (A.D. 1206-1526)

I. ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY

The administrative history of Bihar during the Turko-Afghan period (1206-1526) was inextricably connected with and conditioned by the fluctuations of the political fortunes of the country. Except for the short-lived Lohānī (Nuhānī) dynasty, early medieval Bihar hardly ever enjoyed independent status, being always linked either with Bengal, or with Delhi or with Jaunpur. Six principal landmarks may be discerned in the administrative history of the Bihar of this period,

(i) Union of Bihar and Bengal (*c.*1200-1225)

According to the contemporary historian, Minhāj-us-Sirāj, Muhammad Bakhtīyār Khaljī ruled over both Bihar and Bengal on behalf of the Muslim sovereign of India and his conquests were confirmed by Qutb-ud-dīn. Bakhtīyār's dominion in Bihar included the greater part of Bihar south of the Ganges from the river Karmanāsa up to the Rājmahal Hills. North of the Ganges, the Kosi was the boundary between Tirhut and Bengal. Tirhut was under the powerful Karṇāṭaka dynasty of Mithilā, but the riparian tracts from the mouth of the Gandak to the mouth of the Kosi were perhaps held by Bakhtīyār. Purnea was included in his kingdom of Lakhnauti in Bengal. The government of the day could be defined as a military occupation based on a kind of clannish feudalism.

(ii) Bihar as a Province of the Delhi Empire (*c.*1225-33)

Determined to detach Bihar from Bengal, Sultan Iltutmish appointed Malik Alā-ud-dīn Jānī as governor of Bihar (1225-6). But when the latter was driven out two years later by Husām-ud-dīn, Bihar was united with Oudh and Bengal, under Prince Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd, Malik-us-Sharq (Lord of the East). Iltutmish conquered Bengal and constituted Bihar (including Tirhut and Darbhanga) as a separate province (1230-1), with Malik Alā-ud-dīn Jānī, Malik Saif-ud-dīn Aibak and Tughril Tughān as successive governors. The administrative system of Bihar (as well of Bengal) now became a copy of that of the contemporary Mamluk world—a hierarchy of decentralized minor feudal sovereignties.

(iii) Reunion of Bihar with Bengal (*c.*1234-1320)

Bihar, however, soon lost its separate status, being united with Bengal under Tughril Tughān Khan after his deputation to Lakhnauti (1234). Tughril assumed royalty and though he described himself as 'Sultani' (royal slave) his rule was virtually independent. The next governor of Bihar and Bengal was Jalāl-ud-dīn Masūd Jānī (*c.* May 1247-March 1251), son of Malik Alā-ud-dīn Jānī. Although he bore the title of 'Malik-us-Sharq' and even 'Shah' he owed allegiance to Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn. But Malik Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Yuzbak, the first Shamsi Mamluk who openly assumed the title of Sultan and had the 'khutba' read in his name, conquered Oudh. He also had made three canopies of state, red, black, and white, probably representing sovereignty over the three provinces

of Lakhnauti, Bihar and Oudh. (Sultan Shah) Tāj-ud-dīn Arsalan Khan (*d.* 1265) held independent sway over Bihar and Lakhnauti, and was succeeded by his son, Tātār Khan, governor of Bihar and Lakhnauti (*c.* 1266-67). The new ruler was capable, brave and liberal. Though he sent envoys and presents to Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban, he enjoyed virtual independence.

For a time, under Balban, Bihar was separated from Bengal and placed in the charge of an imperial officer. But Balban's son Bughrā Khan (Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd of Bengal) occupied Bihar (*c.* 1288) and appointed Fīrūz Aitigin governor. Of the four governors of Bengal, Fīrūz was the most powerful feudatory of Sultan Rukn-ud-dīn Kaika-us (son of Bughrā Khan) (1291-1301), suzerain of Bihar and Bengal. After the death of Kaika-us, however, he occupied Bengal as Sultan Shams-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shah (1301-22). His son Tāj-ud-dīn Hatim Khan, governor of Bihar (*c.* 1309-15), was just and generous. In the absence of definite evidence it may perhaps be held that Bihar was not under the effective hold of the Khaljīs but owed allegiance to Bengal.

(*iv*) *Separation of Bihar from Bengal under the Tughluqs*

Under the Tughluqs, the whole province of Bihar, north and south, was separated from Bengal and placed under central officers. Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq occupied Tirhut after subduing the Karṇāṭaka dynasty of Mithilā, and placed it under Ahmad Khan bin Malik Tabligha. Tirhut became a mint-town of the Tughluq Empire under the name of Tughluqpur-urf-Tirhut. In the thirties of the 14th century Bihar was separated from Bengal and annexed to Delhi. The Rajas of North Bihar were tributary, while South Bihar was ruled by governors of Delhi. Bihar remained loyal to Delhi even under the later Tughluqs.

(*v*) *Bihar under Jaunpur and Bengal*

The Sharqi rulers of Jaunpur ruled over the greater part of North and South Bihar, controlling the approaches to Bengal, in the first half of the fifteenth century. But the Ilyās Shāhī kings of Bengal came to control the administration of Bihar (Bhagalpur and Tirhut), while the districts west of Monghyr remained under Jaunpur. The Habshi rulers of Bengal also ruled over a part of Bihar (Bhagalpur), while Husain Shah retained control of Patna and the trans-Gangetic area and North Bihar.

(*vi*) *Bihar under the Afghans* rose against both Delhi and Bengal and the Sūrs dominated the whole of Northern India.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

A. CENTRAL

The Sultanate was a kind of theocracy. The Sultan was a divine agent enforcing and interpreting the Holy Quranic law. His position in the administrative structure of a province like Bihar was that of total despot, subject to no other will but his own. The mainstays of his authority were religion and the army. The people had no rights, only duties: they lived only to carry out his orders. Nevertheless in actual practice his despotism was limited. The Ulema (theologians) insisted on the enforcement of the Quranic law, while the Umarā (nobles) enjoyed a privileged position in the State and constituted a check on the royalty. There was, however, no constitutional means of removing an erring or overbearing Sultan.

As for the officials of the Sultan, who greatly influenced administration in Bihar, it should be noted that the king's household was the pivot of the entire administration. Among the more important household officials were:—(*i*) the Bārbak, who had to submit the petitions of the people to the Sultan; (*ii*) the Hājib, who was the master of ceremonies and the intermediary between the Sultan and his officials and the people, and who in Barani's time came to be known as the Bārbak instead of the Amir-i-Hājib and exercised almost dictatorial powers, specially when the king was weak or young; (*iii*) the Vakil-i-Dar, the administrative head of the king's household establishments and the precursor of the Moghal Mīr-i-Śāmān (steward); and (*iv*) the Shāhna-i-Bārgāh, the superintendent of the court. There was also an extraordinary officer, the Nāib-i-Mamlikat—the deputy ruler—who controlled all aspects of government, both central and provincial, and supplied the directives.

Below the Sultan there were four departmental heads, who had to give necessary directions to respective branches of the provincial government:—(*i*) the Wazir, i.e. the chief minister who supervised every branch of public administration; (*ii*) the Arz-i-Mamālik or Diwān-i-Arz, the head of the army department; (*iii*) the Diwāni-i-Ashraf or Diwān-i-Inshā, the chancellor, in charge of the royal correspondence; and (*iv*) the Diwān-i-risālat, chief of the foreign office.

B. PROVINCIAL

The Mamluk State resembled an occupation army, and the government was, therefore, essentially military in character. In local government and revenue administration and in judicial and military organization, the Mamluks introduced no noticeable alterations, but reproduced their already known methods. Hence the administration of Bihar was of a provisional and experimental character.

(*i*) Vassal rulers were allowed to administer the major part of the kingdom, subject to paying regular tribute (including land revenue and jiziya). The Karṇāṭaka ruler of Mithilā was one such vassal ruler in Tirhut. Mithilā was a tributary of Bakhtīyār Khaljī and continued paying tribute to Bengal up to the time of Śultān Ghiyās-ud-dīn Khaljī. But semi-independent feudal rulers like those of Mithilā often defied the provincial government.

Medieval Mithilā had a well-organized administrative system. Though modelled largely on older forms, it was modified to suit the changes caused by the political turmoil of the period, as may be discerned from the *Rājnīti-Ratnākara* of Chandeśvara, minister of Hari Siṅha and the *Varṇa-Ratnākara* of Jyotiriśwar. The old feudal baronial 'Council of Seven Elders' to keep a check on royalty was gone, but there were the usual ministers and councillors (sabhya-nirupaṇam). Besides the chief minister (maṅtrin, mahāmāttaka), whose office was often hereditary, there was a minister of peace and war (saṅdhivigrahika), a minister for religious affairs (purohitāditarangāh, purohita), the chief justice (prādvivekah, dharmādhikāraṇika), whose office was sometimes combined with that of the minister of peace and war. The commander-in-chief of the army was the senāpati while the keeper of the fort was the durgapāla. There were also sāmaṅtas or feudatories and ambassadors (dūtādi).

(*ii*) *Iqta*

During the 13th century the smallest administrative unit was the iqta. It is sometimes regarded as a fief (its holder being called an iqtadār). It implied a military command over an administrative division. The structure of the State, comprising such iqtas, was necessarily decentralized and loose.

The Muqti was a miniature Sultan within his own jurisdiction. There was no Wazīr of course, but the Dabir (advisor) was the head of the provincial Secretariat. Governor Malik Bayu, had a Śahayak or assistant Shahna, Sadr-ud-dīn, as we learn from a Sanskrit inscription

at Rajgir. Lesser officials, viz., the karkun (clerk), the nawisinda (writer), the amil (collector), and the nāzir formed the administrative and fiscal staff of the governor. All these were paid by his own revenue department. As a rule, he sent to Delhi the surplus balance of revenue after meeting army and administrative expenses. He had to raise the Sultan's share of revenue from among the peasants and Hindu chiefs. He was responsible to the Diwān-i-Wizārat (Finance Ministry) which audited the provincial revenues. The Sultan appointed a Sāhib-i-Diwān or Khwāja in each iqta to keep an eye on the revenue collection, so that the Muqti might not try to evade paying the centre its due.

Under Muhammad Tughluq there were 23 provinces in the empire, of which Bihar was one. In the fourteenth century some provinces (perhaps including Bihar) were divided into shiqs (districts), each under a shiqdār, a military officer, whose duty it was to maintain law and order within his jurisdiction. Subsequently the shiq came to be subdivided into perganas, consisting of a number of villages. Zia-ud-dīn Barani occasionally mentions such perganas and faujdārs. The Malfuzat of the 14th century saint, H. Sharf-ud-dīn refers to the pergana of Rajgir. Ibn Batutah, the famous Moorish traveller, refers to a Sadi, an aggregate of 100 villages, as an administrative unit. There were local revenue officers such as Chaudhuris (pergana headmen), and Muqaddams (village headmen). An Āmil (revenue collector) was posted in each pergana to collect the revenue these officers had realized from the peasants.

(iii) Revenue

In finance, the principal sources of revenue of the Sultan as sanctioned by the holy law were: (*i*) the tax on agricultural produce, known as Kharāj (on the land of non-Muslims varying from $\frac{1}{10}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$) and Ushr ($\frac{1}{10}$ of produce of land held by a Muslim or watered by natural means); (*ii*) the jiziya, or poll-tax on non-Muslims, the per capita rates varying from 48 or 24 or 12 dirhams; (*iii*) the Khums, $\frac{1}{5}$ of the booty captured in war with infidels; (*iv*) the Zakāt, $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ income tax on Muslims, to defray the cost of religious endowments, pensions to Ulemas, and stipends to men of piety and poverty. There was also the income from mines and treasure-trove, heirless property, customs and excise.

(iv) Law and Justice

One of the primary functions of the Sultan was the administration

of justice. Being the fountain-head of justice and responsible for upholding and maintaining the Qurānic law, he tried both original and appellate cases and was the highest court of justice in the realm. He held summary trials of criminal offences. He also tried religious and secular cases. In the former he was assisted by the mufti (legal interpreter) and the sadr-i-jahān or sheikh-ul-Islām (sadr-us-sudur, chief sadr), in the latter by the chief justice (qāzī ul Quzzat, Qāzī-i-Mamālik), head of the Judiciary (diwān-i-qazā), the same person combining both the offices of the chief sadr and the chief justice. Thus, a complainant in Bihar could have his suit tried by the Sultan in Delhi.

The Sultan appointed qāzīs in provinces and their localities on the recommendation of the chief qāzī. Bihar had a provincial qāzī and, presumably, qāzīs in district and big cities but there were no judicial officers in small towns and in rural areas. The governor was expected, if required, to enforce the qāzī's decision. The lower judges in the province were supervised and controlled by the chief qāzī, who also heard appeals.

There was a separate judicial organization for the army. A qāzī-i-lashkar was appointed in military camps, possibly for the administration of some sort of martial law.

The established legal practice in the tributary kingdom of Tirhut was hardly disturbed. Soon after its conquest, however, Fīrūz Tughluq appointed Muslim officers to enforce Muslim law in North Bihar.

The maintenance of the Shariat (canon law) was the responsibility of the Sultan, but non-Muslims could not be brought under it, at least in their social relations. Jurists have, therefore, distinguished between tashri and non-tashri law. The Muslims were guided exclusively by the tashri law in their social and personal affairs. The government pursued a policy of minimum interference in the social affairs of the Hindus and applied the non-tashri law in deciding their cases. In matters such as inheritance, the sale or transfer of land, marriage and so on, the customary law was presumably followed, embodying local customs or the Hindu law.

(*v*) *Police*

The Kotwāl (Sans. *Kotpāl*) was responsible for policing the towns, where, according to the *Varṇa Ratnākara*, there were thieves, pick-pockets, gamblers, adulterers, outlaws, beggars, mendicants like jogis, bhanduās (pimps) and so on. He kept law and order and also helped in

the defence of the city with his contingent of men comprising cavalry and infantry. Presumably a controller of markets corresponding to the Amīr-i-Bāzār or Rais-i-Bāzār existed in the important towns of Bihar to perform some police duties by supervising markets, checking dishonesty and punishing hoarders and profiteers. In Jaunpur there were several market officers like the Mir, the Bali, the Salar and the Khwāja, but their specific duties are not clear. The Muhtasib (Censor of Public Morals) also hepled in the maintenance of law and order. Primarily a member of the judiciary, he enforced the observance of Islamic regulations among the Muslims and acted as prosecutor of offences against the law. The State did not provide police in the villages and small towns. To travel alone was unsafe. Old forts and castles served the purpose of regular prisons.

(vi) Espionage

The Bārīd-i-Mamalik was the chief news-writer of the realm and his department also dealt with the secret service. Bārīds (confidential spies) were posted in towns, bāzārs and almost every inhabited locality, for supplying information to the Emperor. Biharsharif had a Bārīd during the reign of Fīrūz Tughluq, as is evident from an inscription in the local Choti Dargāh.

(vii) The Army

During the thirteenth century probably the muqti of Bihar could organize, discipline and pay an army as he wished. But the Tughluq Sultans fixed the strength, the pay and the equipment of the provincial army. The cavalry was the most important branch of the army. The infantry included foot-soldiers (pāyaks, piāda), archers (dhānuk, from Sans. *dhanush*) and shield-bearers. There were soldiers of many nationalities—Turks, Persians, Afghans, Mongols, Arabs, Habshis, Indian Mussalmans and Hindus. The *Kīrtilatā* refers to the Chaturaṅga (four limbs), viz., the elephant corps, the chariots, the cavalry and the infantry, and to the use of the singini (horn for storing powder), besides the spear and the sword. It also mentions the mule, the ass, the bullock and the buffalo, as the army's beasts of burden and the bheri, kahal, dhol, tabla, tambura, and singā, the army's musical instruments.

The provincial contingents of Bihar were maintained partly by nobles and partly by the provincial governors out of the provincial revenue. In times of war, these were placed under the diwān-i-arz,

who could enforce regulations in connexion with the branding of horses (dāgh) and the descriptive rolls (huliya or chehra) regularly only once a year. Strategic places were specially defended.

Theoretically every able-bodied Muslim was a member of the fighting forces. Special emergency recruits (irregulars), drawn from Muslims and non-Muslims, were enrolled in times of war and for expeditions. There were also volunteers, ordinarily Muslims, who received no pay but had a share in the booty won in jihāds (holy wars).

Soldiers were paid either in cash or in kind. An example of troops being paid in cultivable land was supplied by Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban who settled Afghan soldiers as garrisons in various places including Bhojpur (Shahabad), to suppress highway robbery and to till the land for a living. But payments, at least for higher offices, were made not in cash but in revenue assignments, which were occasionally liable to change. Mian Malik was the jāgīrdār of Arwal in the time of Sikandar Lodī.

It is well known that in medieval times there was no separation of civil and military functions. This is borne out by the *Kīrtilatā* which refers to the Qāzi, the Khwāja and the Makhdum participating in battle.

C. RURAL

The traditional village in Bihar remained practically unaffected by the numerous changes brought about by the Muslim conquest and subsequent dynastic upheavals and political crises. The ruling classes lived in military stations and cities. It was only very slowly that the rural areas were penetrated by non-military Muslims, except for the missionaries. Contact between the non-Muslims and the ruling race was not frequent. But by the end of the period, Muslim settlements in villages (e.g. Siwan sub-division of Saran) became common. The village was left undisturbed so long as it did not create trouble by recalcitrance in paying the revenue. Muhammad Tughluq endeavoured to introduce a uniform standard of land revenue by ensuring that no village remained unassessed, but the effort proved futile. Each village had its own headman (muqaddam), watchman (chowkidār) and revenue officer (patwāri). The villagers arranged their own watch and ward, education (elementary) and sanitation. The village headman acted both as the committing and the trying magistrate of crimes committed in the village. The village

assemblies or Panchāyats with their long-established tradition for managing local affairs, executive and judicial, continued to function without interference as long as they did not clash with the Qāzī's jurisdiction, although their decrees, based on local custom, did not sometimes conform with the State law. The law of the Panchāyat was its own. Disputes were settled locally without taking recourse to the law of the courts. Verdicts were binding on the parties and were as a rule non-appealable.

Mithilā had a distinctive local administration, consisting of gulma (groups of three to five villages), and rāstra (groups of hundreds of villages). Every village had its own headman, whose rates of remuneration varied according to different categories. The head of a single village (grāmapati or grāmādhipati) received contributions made in kind by the villagers; the head of ten villages (daśeśa or daśa grāmapati) and the head of twenty (vimśatīśa) were given as much land as could be cultivated with one and four ploughs respectively; the head of a hundred (śateśa) and of a thousand (sahasra grāmapati, sahasrādhipati) villages were remunerated by a village and a city or town respectively. Arrangements existed for the reference of disputes to a higher authority. There was a royal supervisor (snigdhah) of the villages, while a high official (sarvārtha chiṅtakam) was also appointed in every city or town.



XIV

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND CULTURE 1206-1526

A. Religion

Hinduism

THE contrast between the popular beliefs and practices of the vast majority of common people and the highly philosophical doctrines of the thoughtful and cultured few among Hindus was noticed by medieval foreign visitors. The most notable among them were the Muslim savants and scholarly travellers, Al-Biruni and Ibn Batutah of the 11th and 12th centuries respectively, and the anonymous Parsi author of *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib* (Garden of Religions) who wrote in the 16th century, in the suburbs of Patna. What they all wrote was applicable to Bihar as well as to other parts of India. They could see that, unlike the ready-made, codified, fixed faith they themselves followed, the Hinduism of the day had grown through a process of slow and steady evolution. It was obvious that it had shown, by its comprehensive spiritual basis, a remarkable capacity for countenancing, assimilating, and accommodating every cult and doctrine which could attract and satisfy various classes of people. Even Śaṅkara (8th century), the greatest exponent of monism, did not discard the Paurāṇic and other deities or the prayers addressed to them. In fact, it was Śaṅkara who gave a crushing blow to the heterodox schools of thought on the ideological and metaphysical side and made way for a full-fledged revival of popular Hinduism. Later, the development of Mahāyāna Buddhism expressed itself in Taṅtrayāna, Vajrayāna and Kāla Chakrayāna.

We have already seen that a new type of Hinduism had emerged. It was that which was the main feature of the religious life of medieval Bihar. The most significant change in the newly invigorated Brāhmaṇical religion which triumphed over Buddhism was that,

though primarily based on the Vedic system of beliefs and practices, the spiritual realization of the Upanishads and the Epics and Purāṇas, it was centred in the devotion to the Supreme Being worshipped mainly in its triple form of Brahmā, Śiva, Vishṇu. Popular Hinduism began with the doctrine of Trimurti, Brahmā being the creator, Śiva the destroyer, and Vishṇu the preserver. But this Trinitarianism gradually tended to the comparative neglect of Brahmā and gradual harmonizing of Śaivism, Vaishṇavism, and even of Śāktism. This was the result of general tolerance and the syncretism of the spiritually all-embracing system of thought and culture known as Hinduism. The fundamental idea behind all the sectarian forms was the worship of a Personal Being or His incarnations, an essentially monotheistic idea. A marked feature was the relation of religion to the conduct of life and the far higher place given to moral qualities in the Deity. It gave the message of a Lord of grace; and the worship of the Lord by a loving and devout heart was placed even above Jnāna and Karma. A more human attitude than before was adopted towards the weak and the downtrodden and more prominence was given to the need of holding together by mutual toleration.

Medieval Mithilā, the stronghold of popular Hinduism and the home of Sanskritic and Śāstric learning, was a great centre of Śiva, Śakti and Vishṇu worship and it was closely associated with Tāntric forms of beliefs and practices. Literary sources and archaeological finds at a number of places show that besides the worship of Śiva and Vishṇu with their consorts, along with that of the incarnations Rāma and Kṛishṇa, there were other divinities such as Sūrya, Kārtikeya, Balarāma, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Hanumanta who were also held in reverence. Carved figures of these gods have been discovered on the door-frames of many houses. In fact, there was a multiplicity of gods and goddesses in the scheme of the religious life of Maithils.

The prevalence of Mahādeva and Śiva Liṅga temples and references in the works of Vidyāpati show the great honour paid to Śiva. It is significant that Govinda Thākur and his brother, Chandreśwar Thākur, wrote *Govinda Mānasollas* and *Śaiva Mānasollas* dealing with various kinds of Kṛishṇa (Govinda, incarnation of Vishṇu) and Śiva worship respectively. No less importance was attached to the worship of Śakti. While Śakti gave 'Siddhi', Śiva gave 'Moksha'. Medieval Mithilā had a number of Śākta scholars and writers. In fact, Śakti worship was universally prevalent in medieval Mithilā. The

Vaishṇava festival, Vidyāpati's versions of the *Bhāgavat Purāṇa*, the beautiful Rādhā Kṛishṇa lyrics and the Kṛishṇaite songs of Umāpati of Tirhut, show that Vaishṇavism too had much hold on Maithils. The discovery of the image of Sūrya in a number of places and the existence of the old Sun temple at Kandahar (Saharsa) with an inscription belonging to the time of the Oinwar Brāhmaṇa ruler, Narsimha Deva, prove that the sun-cult was also there. Medieval sculpture of the Pāla period discovered at Eksāra, near Ekma in Saran, show two images of Vishṇu and another of Nṛitya Ganapati (Dancing Ganeśa) (Pl. XIV, Fig. 33). They have been already published (J.B.R.S.). There is now no reason to suppose that the worship of these gods did not survive the Pāla period. In Magadha, the Gayālis, the descendants of Magga Brāhmaṇas who were Śiva worshippers or devotees of Maheśvara, according to O'Malley, were converted to Vaishṇavism in the 14th century A.D. (J.A.S.B. 1903). Actually, as has been rightly pointed out (J.B.R.S. 1938), Vishṇu worship had established itself in Gaya three centuries earlier, for the Gadadhar temple was built in the 15th year of Nayapāla's reign. Cunningham noted an inscription inside the sanctum of the temple of Sūrya a short distance from the Vishṇupad group of hills in Gaya. It was built during the Tughluq period and is dated A.D. 1372.

The inclusion of the word 'Tāpasi', which means performers of austere devotion, in the list of 'Maṅda Jatiyas' in the *Varṇa-Ratnākara* shows the contempt in which a certain ascetic sect of Sādhus was held, in the 14th century, by the Brāhmaṇa votaries of Śiva, Śakti and Vishṇu. There may have been some order of ascetics who practised self-mortification, austerity and self-imposed poverty and begging, reminiscent of the Buddha and Jaina systems of the past. They could not be followers of Tāntric Buddhism, but may be taken to be a sect of Śiva, Paśupati. Jyotiriśwar Thākur has made mention of as many as 74 out of 84 Nātha Siddhas headed by Maininātha and Gorakhnāth, Kapāli and Jaldhar showing that the sect had already been well established in popular estimation in the preceding century and 'had been ingratiating itself with the orthodox by its frank and open allegiance to Śiva and to the Yoga practice.' That the Nāth cult and the Siddhas were very popular in the 14th and 15th centuries and earlier in India, including North and South Bihar, is also attested by the frequent references to them in Persian and Hindi writings of Muslim saints such as the Sūfī saint of Bihar, H. Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad Maneri, and Sheikh Qutban, the author of *Mirgāvati*. Among the

letters of the former, as many as seven are addressed to Maulāna Shāhbāz, alias Gorakhnāth, evidently a Gorakhpanthi Kānpatha Yogi who had turned a Muslim.

Navya Nyāya

Before passing on to Jainism, it is interesting to note the rich contribution that Mithilā made to intellectual life, especially to philosophical thought, in the medieval period. In fact, Navya Nyāya is a contribution to the Indian system of thought itself.

Between the 13th and 16th centuries A.D., Bihar was at the height of intellectual activity. Mithilā was then a renowned seat of learning with country-wide reputation. Scholars from different parts of India came here to receive the highest training in Logic.

The credit for this goes to Gangeśa Upādhyāya (13th century), founder of the Navya Nyāya (Neo-logic) school of Mithilā. His work, *Tattva Chintāmaṇi* (briefly known as Maṇi, i.e. jewel) created a new epoch in the history of Indian Logic. The birthplace of Gangeśa Upādhyāya is supposed to be Mangarauni, a village in the district of Darbhanga (near Madhubani). He is said to have established his academy at Kariyana, a village twelve miles south-east of Darbhanga town.

Gangeśa diverted the current of Nyāya philosophy into a fresh channel. Emphasis was shifted from Padārtha-vivechana (Ontology) to Pramāna-vivechana (Epistemology). The four Pramānas (viz. Pratyaksha, Anumāna, Upamāna and Śabda) were made the subject of a thoroughgoing scrutiny. Attention was focussed on the subtleties of Inference. The nature of Vyāpti (the relation of universal concomitance between the middle and major terms), which is the basis of all inference, was subjected to the most critical examination. Even now the problem of Induction is one of the knottiest problems in Logic. Gangeśa discussed it threadbare in the minutest detail long before it engaged the attention of western logicians.

The *Tattva Chintāmaṇi* constitutes an important landmark in the sphere of thought. It exerted a strong influence on the minds of subsequent thinkers for many centuries that followed. Successive generations of scholars devoted themselves to an understanding of its profound implications. Commentaries, sub-commentaries and glosses were written on it to such an extent that a vast literature grew round the original work. The popularity enjoyed by *Maṇi* in intellectual circles has hardly been equalled.

After Gangeśa, we find in Mithilā, Vardhamāna, Pakshadhara and a long line of Naiyāyikas. The names and works of some prominent logicians of the Mithilā school are given below:

Vardhamāna Upādhyāya was the son of Gangeśa Upādhyāya. His main works are: (i) *Tattva-Chintāmaṇi-prakāśa*; (ii) *Nyāya-nibandha-prakāśa*; (iii) *Nyāya-pariśishta-prakāśa*; (iv) *Kiraṇāvali-prakāśa*; (v) *Nyāya-kusumāñjali-prakāśa*; (vi) *Nyāya-līlāvatī-prakāśa*; and (vii) *Khandana-khādya-prakāśa*. The last is a commentary on the *Khandan-khanda-khādga* (a Vedantic treatise) of Śrī Harsha. The importance of Vardhamāna can be judged by the fact that he has been referred to by Mādhavāchārya (Vidyāranya of Vijayanagar) in his *Sarva-darśana-saṅgraha*.

Pakshadhara Miśra's real name was Jayadeva, but he was popularly known as Pakshadhara, presumably because he could argue on any point for a full 'Paksha' (a fortnight) or because he could stick to his 'Paksha' (thesis). Pakshadhara Miśra was born of a respected Mithilā Brāhmaṇa family of Darbhanga district. According to tradition, he lived in the court of Raja Bhairava Siṁha of Mithilā (15th century) and was a contemporary of the great poet Vidyāpati Thākur. A palm-leaf manuscript gives the date of his copying *Vishṇupurāṇa* as 1452. Pakshadhara Miśra's main works are: (i) *Tattva-Chintāmaṇi-āloka* (briefly called *Āloka*); (ii) *Dravya-padārtha*; and (iii) *Līlāvatī viveka*.

Vasudeva Miśra was the nephew and pupil of Pakshadhara Miśra. He wrote a commentary on *Maṇi* known as the *Tattva-Chintāmaṇi-ṭīkā*. He bore the title of Nyāya-siddhānta-sārabhijna.

Ruchidatta Miśra was also a pupil of Pakshadhara Miśra. His main works are: (i) *Tattva-Chintāmaṇi-prakāśa* and (ii) *Nyāya-kusumāñjali-prakāśa-makaranda*.

Śaṅkara Miśra was exceptionally brilliant from his very childhood. His main known works are eight in number, and are on logic and Vedānta. Most important of them are: (i) *Tattva-Chintāmaṇi-Mayukha*; (ii) *Vaisheshika Upaskara*; (iii) *Bheda-ratna-prakāśa*; and (iv) *Abheda-dhikkāra*.

Vāchaspati Miśra (the younger) is said to have written ten philosophical works of which the following are available: (i) *Anumāna-khanda-ṭīkā*; (ii) *Nyāya-sutroddhāra*; and (iii) *Khandana khandoddhāra*. This [Abhinava] Vāchaspati lived in the court of Raja Bhairavendra Siṁha of Mithilā in the 15th century. He is famous for his works on Smṛiti also.

Bhagīratha (Megha) Thākur's main works are: (i) *Kusumāñjali-prakāśa-prakāśikā*; (ii) *Kiraṇāvali-prakāśa-prakāśikā*; and (iii) (Nyāya) *Līlāvati-prakāśa-vyākyā*.

Maheśa Thākur was the founder of the Darbhanga Raj (1558), and the ancestor of the present Maharaja. He was born in the village of Bhaura, seventeen miles north-east of Darbhanga, in the Khandaval family. His main work is the *Āloka Darpaṇa*, a commentary on the *Āloka* of Pakshadhara Miśra. It is quoted as an authority.

This is in short a glimpse of the great Naiyāyikas of the Mithilā school who introduced new logical concepts giving rise to subtle hair-splitting distinctions to secure exactitude of expression. The technical terminology employed by the Navya Nyāya school to ensure precision of thought and language (e.g. avachhedakatā, prakāratā, anuyogitā, pratiyogitā and so on) soon became the vehicle of intellectual discourse throughout India.

The Mithilā school of Nyāya flourished for about three centuries. The last veteran champions of this school were Śaṅkara and Abhinava Vāchaspati. After them, there were no equally notable exponents. The sun of Logic set in Mithilā to rise immediately afterwards in Navadvīpa (in Bengal).

The Navya Nyāya of Mithilā was imported into Bengal by such brilliant scholars of Nadia as Vasudeva Sārvabhauma and Raghunātha Tarkaśiromaṇi who came to Mithilā and learnt the new Logic from Pakshadhara Miśra. Soon after, the Nadia school rose into prominence and eclipsed the Mithilā school.

Nevertheless, some Naiyāyikas tried to keep the lamp of Nyāya burning in Mithilā. Mention may be made of Durgādatta Miśra (author of *Nyāya-bodhini*), Devanātha Thākur (author of *Tattva-Chintāmaṇi-āloka-pariśistha*) and Madhusudana Thākur (author of *Tattva-Chintāmaṇi-āloka-kaṅtakoddhāra*).

It is gratifying to note that even the women of Mithilā (in the 15th and 16th centuries) took an interest in philosophy. Lachhima Devi (wife of Raja Chandra Siṁha) is credited with the authorship of a book *Padārtha Chandra* (a treatise on Nyāya-Vaiseshika), which she wrote at the initiative of her teacher, Misaru Miśra. Some other learned ladies of this period were Lakhima Devi (wife of Raja Śiva Siṁha), Viśwāsa Devi (wife of Raja Padma Siṁha), and Chandrakalā Devi (daughter-in-law of the poet Vidyāpati Thākur).

The Mithilā school of Nyāya began to decline after the 16th century. But it does not mean that philosophic studies came to an end.

The traditions of Nyāya and Mīmāṁsā were kept alive in this land by such great scholars as Gokulanāth Upādhyāya, Sachala Upādhyāya and others during the 17th and 19th centuries.

JAINISM

As for Jainism, the centre of activities of its adherents had already shifted, for unknown causes, from the land of its birth, Bihar, to those of Karṇāṭaka, Andhra-desh, Tamilnad, Western India, Rajputana and Gujerat, where it flourished under the patronage of the Cholas, Pāndyas, Kalachuris, Rāshṭrakūṭas and Solankis. Though their greatest contribution to religious art and literature was made elsewhere, medieval Bihar was also not devoid of their architectural and sculptural gifts. It was losing ground by the end of the Pāla period but the Jaina temples containing the holy footprints and even images of Rishabhadeva, Ādinath, Sāṅtināth, Nemināth and Pārśvanāth, all belonging to the Pāla period, have continued till today to be objects of veneration and sanctity for the adherents of Jainism. A large number of Jaina metal images discovered in Chausa, near Buxar, and elsewhere in Bihar, and deposited in Patna Museum, testify to the popularity of the faith in early medieval India. A village, 25 miles south-west of Purulia, in the Bagda Pergana of Manbhum, the eastern part of Chotanagpur, contains many fragmentary Jaina images. The most noteworthy of them, described in a published article (J.B.O.R.S. 1942), are the Digambara image of a Tīrthaṅkara, who was worshipped as 'Bhiram', and another of the Yakshinī attendant of Nemināth, the 22nd Tīrthaṅkara. Another slab within the enclosed wall of a temple on Deogarh Hill contains the image of a Jaina female deity with lion and child. The Manbhum images have been placed somewhere between the 11th and 12th centuries. Mention may also be made of a Jaina temple with a broken inscription at Nālandā. Yuan Chwang met only a few Jainas there and noticed the decay of Jainism, and Fa-Hien makes no mention of it. But other parts of Eastern India still acknowledged the faith. Even in the 13th century, there were heads of organized associations of Jainas in Magadha, Gauḍa and Vaṅga. A 14th century Sanskrit inscription found in one of the temples on the Vipula Hills at Rajgir, gives the genealogy of the Jaina devotee and builder of the Svetambar section. According to the Jaina writer, P. C. Nahar, the Rajgir and the Pavapuri inscriptions show that the 'Mahātiyānas' (Mathens) belonging to the family of Dalya (mentioned in an inscription)

followed the Jaina religion and abounded in that province in those days. 'They were all along treated with sympathy and kindness and received help from the Muslim government on account of their peaceful and loyal character.' (J.B.R.S.)

Buddhism

When the Muslims came, Buddhism, though not flourishing, had yet its vihāras and monastic orders in South Bihar. The popular form of it had got mixed up with the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon. Though there was a petty Buddhist king, Buddha Sena, in Gaya, he was unable to lend his helping hand to the followers of the faith of Śākya Muni. Inmates of the Buddhist vihāras who were slaughtered by Bakhtīyār Khaljī and his followers, have been described by the contemporary historian, Minhāj-us-Sirāj, as 'Brāhmaṇas with shaven heads'. The 16th century Buddhist writer, Tārānātha observed, 'The Turushka king (?) by means of several Bhikshus who were his messengers and with other smaller kings of Turushkas living in Bengal (?) and other parts of the country killed many clerics in Odantpuri, destroyed this as well as Vikramśilā and on the site of old vihāras a fortress of Turushka was erected.' Prof. Samaddar has described the fall of the Buddhists from their old lofty and noble ideals and their degeneration into a host of Tāntric sects which were an admixture of the Śaiva and Śākta cults.

The Tibetan scholar, Chag Lo-Tsa-Ba Chos-Rje-Dpal, alias Dharmaswāmī, who set out for India from Nepal in about 1234 and whose memoirs have recently been translated into English by the Russian scholar, J. N. Roerich, has given an interesting account of his journey in Bihar. He visited various holy places such as Rajgir and Vajrāsana (Gaya) and took lessons from the celebrated Buddhist preachers Rāhula Śrībhadra and Yaśomitra. There was a general terror of the Turushka soldiers all around. Monks and priests were running away for shelter. He has described the exciting episode of his own escape with the famous Guru, Śrībhadra, whom he carried on his shoulders to a safe place away from the Turkish soldiers. He was once accosted by two of these soldiers who wanted to rob him of his gold, if he had had any, and who snatched away his begging-bowl. At the vihāra of Vajrāsana (Gaya), only four monks, who had the courage of their convictions, stayed on. He tells us that Nālandā, though damaged and deserted, was still standing in 1236-37 and some scholastic activity was being carried on, despite the constant hazards

characteristic of the times. He mentions some vihāras at Nālandā which were still intact. There were 84 'human dwellings' (cells) and four specially holy images. He says there were two vihāras in Gaya, each having six to fifteen monks, mostly Hīnayānists. The great vihāra of Vikramśilā had been standing in the time of Dharmaswāmī's uncle, but he himself did not find any trace of it and reported that the Turkish soldiers had destroyed it and thrown its stones into the Ganges. It has, however, to be remembered that the Turkish soldiers, despite their iconoclastic zeal, were mostly ignorant and superstitious; for Dharmaśwāmī himself mentions that when one of the three hundred who were committing sacrilegious acts near the shrine of a Buddhist deity Gyānnāth, died of colic, the image was left undamaged by the rest.

He observed with terror the sacrificial offering of a large herd of cattle at a certain place in Magadha to the image of a deity called Somnāth (Śaivite); but elsewhere, again in Magadha, he was pleased to find that instead of animal sacrifice an offering of grain was made. Devotees made offerings of curd, milk, perfumes, of sandalwood and camphor-dust to Buddha by pouring them at the root of the Bodhi tree. He notes the decline of Buddhism when he says that the Hīnayānists were few, Mahāyānists were fewer still, and the non-Buddhists were—'numerous.' He refers to 'some one' who said that Buddhists were not good, and though a Mahāyānist himself, he frankly admits the superior character of the Hīnayānists. They were distinguished by greater kindness than the Tibetan followers of Mahāyāna. The common non-Buddhist people of his time in Bihar were simple, kind and considerate. They were willing to accommodate Buddhist monks when they went on their daily round of alms-begging. When they met a monk they prostrated themselves and said 'Salutation to Rāhula'. As for royalty, Buddha Sena of Gaya took off his silken turban, halted, got down from his elephant and saluted the Tibetan mendicant scholar; Rām Singh the Kshatriya Karṇāṭa Raja of Patala, in Tirhut, also invited him, though in a less deferential manner. The Raja was very pleased to meet the foreign traveller and rewarded him liberally.

Dharmaswāmī found at Nālandā, stone images of Tārā, Manjuśrī, Gyānnāth, and of Lord Khaspana. A modern writer, Waddel, writes about numerous inscribed images of Tārā dating from the 8th to the 12th century at old Buddhistic sites, particularly in Magadha. Mr P. C. Choudhary has described an image of Tārā which he

found in Parbati, a village in the extreme north-east corner of Gaya district (J.B.R.S. 1936). According to Tārānātha, Tāntric Buddhism began to acquire importance from the 6th century when the first of the 64 Tantras was written. Vikramśilā, founded by the Pālas early in the 9th century, was a Tāntric University and the Pālas patronized this type of Buddhism, which is closely allied to Tāntrism.

Islām

EARLY MUSLIM SETTLERS

The Muslim immigrants who settled down and became a part of the population of Bihar had certain distinctive features. Their cardinal doctrine was the unity of God. It admitted of no compromise even for illustrative or artistic purposes. They believed in congregational worship and prayers, thus showing solidarity. They were impressive in their unity, discipline and simplicity. Their social outlook was democratic and equalitarian which was in contrast to the tendencies of the social systems prevalent in India. They had different ideals and conceptions of social life. They could be distinguished by their names, religious rites and ceremonies, festivals, diet, dress, marriages, and their law of inheritance and divorce. Thus they formed an entirely separate entity and a firmly-welded community distinct from the general populace. The establishment of a new foreign power with so characteristic a way of life was bound to affect the conditions of Indian life. But the impact of Islām on Hinduism did not imply such tremendous and revolutionary changes as had occurred in Persia, Egypt, and other countries. The main currents of the ancient Hindu order of religion and society survived the impact, thanks to the spirited protective and precautionary measures adopted by the dominant priestly class, the preservers of the Vedic scriptures and the champions of Varṇāśramadharma. The new people were not welcomed with any warm feeling or allowed to settle down without opposition and resistance. But such resistance was not uniform throughout India. Bihar had no sturdy champions of neo-Hinduism as had the Rajputs, and the political opposition was not too strong. It was weaker in South Bihar than in North. The reaction of the orthodox Hindus to Muslim contacts was naturally not free from bitterness. But time is a great healer. There could not be a perpetual state of antipathy and antagonism. In the course of years, mutual understanding and appreciation, and even reciprocal influences, were inevitable. Islām in its new environment was bound to become

somewhat different from what the newcomers brought with them, and the syncretic tendencies of Hinduism were always silently and imperceptibly at work. But even this assimilative and all-comprehensive Hinduism, which had absorbed the preceding waves of conquering and ruling races of central Asia, did not succeed so well in the case of the Muslims.

Islām is a missionary religion without a missionary organization. Apart from the Muslim aristocracy which consisted of the conquering and ruling races, Turks, Mongols and Afghans, there were saints and Sūfīs, scholars and preachers, largely of Arab and Persian extraction, whose ideal amidst their materialistic surroundings was mainly 'otherworldly' and whose aim in life was to secure the reward of the 'other world' by propagating their faith among the vast mass of non-Islamic people. Militant fierceness, iconoclastic activities and political pressure and persuasion must have come into play, but they had their reaction in hardening the attitude of the vanquished against the victors.

The Sūfī saints and missionaries laboured under no such handicaps. There was no fear of any general conflagration as a result of their peaceful activities. They were in touch with the currents of social life and preferred to work on congenial soil and in responsive quarters. In course of time they succeeded in adding immensely to their following by admitting within the pale of Islām a large proportion of converts of low caste. They carried on their work without any ostensible assistance from those who possessed power and authority. Quite in keeping with their ideals and outlook, they refrained from putting on record the measure of success they attained. Casual references and incidental notices in contemporary mystic literature give us an idea of the methods they adopted and the extent of the success they attained. The 14th century saint Sharf-ud-dīn once said, 'All the religions are true at their root but their blind followers introduced extraneous matters. So long as a man does not realize the real nature of a religion, he should not accept it. Even if I ask a Hindu, a thousand times to become a Muslim, he should not change his faith.' (M.M.) Even modern writers like Sir Thomas Arnold and Prof. K. M. Sen of Viśvabhāratī, who have specially studied the subject, have admitted the effects of the work of the Sūfīs. The latter has observed, 'the Muhammadan proselytization of India did not begin with coercion and blood; the first conversions were made by its saints and mystics.'

Neither rulers nor Ulemas nor Mullās, or theologians, were responsible for the peaceful penetration of Islām. It was mainly effected

by the Sūfī saints and fakirs. The theologians occupied a prominent position in the state and filled the judicial and religious offices. They were anxious to please the secular authority and were more interested in the rigid interpretation of Muslim dogmas than in the life and salvation of the common people. All the Ulemas, Mullās and Sūfīs were orthodox Sunnī Muslims in pre-Moghal Bihar. There is no trace of the sectarian differences between Shiā and Sunnī at that time. All the Muslim kings of India followed the Hanafi School of Jurisprudence. But the Sūfīs were all known for their broad-minded tolerance, catholicity of views and other virtues which were the main cause of their success.

THE SŪFĪS

Sūfīsm, which may be said to have reinterpreted Semitic Islām to the Aryan world, found a more fruitful soil in India than elsewhere. The Sūfī, with his fervent love of, and devotion to, the One Eternal Reality immanent in all things, believes that it can be known and realized through Divine Illumination and Grace. He regards the soul to be of divine origin. Though temporarily lodged in the human body, it is anxious to return to its origin. The soul sets out as a traveller (salik) by slow stages (maqamat) on its journey (safar), along the mystic way (tariqat). Then it goes to the stage next to Law (sharrat) through gnosis (maarifat) and reaches the Reality (haqiqat). It must submit itself wholly to, and seek the guidance of, a spiritual master (sheikh, murshid, pir) and go through a long course of discipline, involving manual work, fasts, night vigils, meditation, control of self or ego (nafs), recital of divine names in rapid cadence with physical movements (zikr and sama), regulation of breath (habs-i-dam) and so on. There is much in common between a Sūfī, a Hindu Bhakta and a Yogi. Though a Muslim, a Sūfī is imbued also with other than Islāmic influences, including those of Hindu philosophy. He tends like a Hindu monist to identify himself with God. His practice of rising above individuality to attain the One Reality comes very near the Hindu Vedānta Sādhanā. Such is also the case with his belief in the moral exaltation of life in pursuit of duty, and his belief that the ways of God are as numerous as the souls of men.

A Sūfī, unlike the Mullā, clings not to the letter of the Holy Book but to its spirit. He measures himself not by his knowledge or action but by love and devotion. He has goodwill for all men and considers the service of mankind to be superior to formal worship. He puts

aside his personal desires, likes and dislikes in order to render himself agreeable and helpful to all, irrespective of caste, colour or race. He wants every man to do what is expected of him. Letter 71 of *Maktubat-i-Sadi* of the Sūfī saint, H. Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad Maneri, says, 'A Sūfī regards one's power and possessions as intended for the use of others.' *Fawaid-i-Rukni*, a Malfuz by the same saintly personage tells us, that 'Each man ought to function according to his calling in life.'

The Sūfīs of Bihar generally belonged to the 'Wujudia' rather than to the 'Shuhudia' school, their creed being 'Hama Oast' (Everything is He) and not 'Hama Az Oost' (Everything is from Him). This apparently is an echo of monistic Vedānta. Their conception of 'passing away' (fanā), of gradual perfection till one attains beatitude, the use of the rosary, the story of the prince beggar, and so on, are possibly the result of Buddhistic influences. Their idea of perpetual conflict between good and evil, God and Satan, remind us of the Zarathushtrian conception of dualism. There are certain superficial resemblances also between the idea of the seven worlds (awalim-i-sabaa) and Sapta Lok, Muraqiba and Samādhi, Wali and Arhat, Habs-i-Dam and Prāṇāyām, Pir and Guru, and so forth. But one should not father the one on the other and hastily conclude that Sūfīsm was a mere mixture of Vedāntism, Yoga, and of Buddhistic and Zoroastrian beliefs and practices. While 'fanā', like Nirvāṇa of Buddhism, teaches loss of individuality, it is not merely negative, for it is accompanied by 'baqa' or everlasting life. The unity preached is the unity of the Personality of God as an object of worship, and not an abstract unity which excludes all diversity. The 'God' of the Sūfīs is somewhat like that of the neo-Vaishṇavas, very much 'saguna' or possessed of attributes; but the one Absolute Merciful God of the Sūfīs is very different from 'Nirguna Para Brāhma'.

The Bihar Sūfīs reconciled religion with philosophy and the seven letters of H. Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad to M. Shāhbāz, alias Gorakhnāth, indicate his anxiety to explain everything in terms of Islām. He quotes such philosophical Sūfīs as Ghazzali, Āin-ul-Quzzat and Shāhabud-dīn Suharwadi. He wrote a commentary on the latter's Arabic work, *Adab-ul-Muridin* and frequently cites his views from his standard work, *Awarif-ul-Maarif*. But it would be unhistorical to deny the possibility of cultural contacts and the permeation of essentially Indian ideas into their thoughts, experiences and actions.

The outbursts of some heterodox views on the part of some early

Bihari Muslims such as Sheikh Aaz of Kako (Gaya) and Ahmad Bihari, made them 'martyrs'. Sultān Fīrūz Shah Tughluq, in his autobiography *Futuhat*, refers to them. He describes one of them as, 'the chief of a sect which wore the garment of atheism, and having thrown off all restraints, led men astray... He dwelt in the city and a party of his followers called him "God". One of his disciples affirmed that a god had appeared in Delhi, that is Ahmad Bihari. When these facts were proved against him, I ordered them both to be confined and punished with chains.' H. Shuaib, the saint of Sheikhpura (Monghyr), writes in his book, *Manaqib-ul-Asfia*, that Sheikh Aaz and Ahmad Bihari were condemned to death by the order of Fīrūz Shah, at the instance of orthodox Ulemas of Delhi. They were 'Dīwānā Sifātan' (inspired or infatuated madcaps) and in their madness they talked wildly and spoke flashy or meretricious words about secrets of the unity of God. We are told further that when the great saint of Bihar heard of their fate, he felt very grieved and exclaimed that he would not be surprised if a city where the blood of such 'Pākān' (pure ones) was shed should suffer sack and devastation.

An extract from the fifth letter of the well known *Maktubat-i-Sadi* of the Saint of Bihar will bear quotation here: 'The pilgrim may pass on the way through certain spiritual experiences, and the soul may put off the physical garments, catch the reflection of the Divine light, display superhuman powers, as a Divine Agent, taste the relish of "I am God the Holy", and become proud of having reached the goal. But he may not understand this intellectually, and if his soul, during the continuance of these experiences, is not helped by a spiritual guide, he may, it is feared, lose faith and fall a victim to false notions of unity (wahdat), incarnations (hulul) and indentification with God (ittihad).' This shows how an aspirant without a proper guide is likely to go astray.

Islāmic mysticism or Sūfīsm appears to have reached the regions of Bihar even before its conquest by the Turks. The earliest preachers were members of the Chisti and Suharwadia orders of Sūfīs. Some of the most notable and representative saints of the Chisti order were M. Shahab-ud-dīn, popularly known as 'Pir Jagjot' of Jethuli (Patna dt.), H. Badr-i-Ālam of Choti Dargah, Mīr Fazlullah Gosain of Daira, Farid-ud-dīn Tawaila Bux of Chandpura, Ahmad Isā Tāj of Bhaisasur, Atāullah Baqhdali of Mir Dad and Syed Sadr-ud-dīn Zahidi. They all belonged to Bihar town. Saran was also one of the chief centres of activity of the Chisti saints but we can mention only

a few names associated with it such as the scholarly Mīr Zahid Sārani of Sepaha, Abdul Malik of Ushri, and M. Syed Hasan of Hasanpura.

DIFFERENT ORDERS OF SŪFĪS

The Madaria and the Shuttaria orders at one time had a great hold on the people of Bihar but later gradually sank into the background. An important representative of the former was Syed Jamāl-ud-dīn Jaman 'Jati' (Yati, one who has controlled himself)·whose mausoleum at Hilsa (Patna district) contains a dated inscription. The Syed was a disciple of the celebrated Baha-ud-dīn Madar of Makanpur (U.P.) who came and lived in Bihar. He was a real 'Sannyasi'. The Madaria order is taken as 'Be Shraa' as distinguished from the 'Ba Shera' or regular orders of Sūfīs, and its members had a very close association with the Hindu 'Yogis' and 'Siddhas'.

As regards the Shuttaria order, the word is derived either from 'Shatir' which means a mystic who had broken with the world, or 'Shatr' which implies 'walking quickly' 'so as to become merged in God' (fanā fillah) and to rest in God (baqa-billah). The Shuttari dispenses with the negative and adheres to the affirmative. He affirms 'tauhid' which is 'I am I', that is, understanding one, saying one, seeing one, and being one. 'He does not complain, eats whatever he gets, and keeps the real gift-giver in view.' This order was also not free from Hindu influences. One of the greatest saints and preachers was Abul Faiz Qazin Ola of Bania Basarh, near Vaiśālī, who received his spiritual investiture at Mandu by the pioneer of the order in India, Sheikh Abdullah Shuttari, in 1476.

The Qadri order was also represented in pre-Moghal Bihar but its importance and hold increased much later and it is now one of the chief Sūfī orders in this province. We had one of its best representatives, Syed Muhammad of Amjhar Sharif in Gaya district.

By far the most important of all the orders in Bihar was the Suhar-wadia, especially its sub-section, the Firdausia Silsila. The date of the first of these members, Maulana Muhammad, called Imam Tāj Faqih, is 1180. The celebrated saint H. Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad, who was born at Maner in 1262 and died in Biharsharif in 1377, belonged to this sub-section.

The Firdausi saints of Bihar have fortunately left for us a consider-able literature in the form of Makhtubat and Malfuzat and other mystical tracts, some of which are of historical interest and value.

The Makhtubats of H. Sharf-ud-dīn contain letters addressed as replies to those coming from such high personages as Emperors Muhammad Tughluq and Fīrūz Shah, Prince Dawer Malik, governors like Mufarrih-ul Mulk, Malik Husam-ud-dīn and many officials and Ulemas, too numerous to mention.

B. Society

Social Organization of the Hindus

VARṆA AND ĀŚRAMA

The complex social structure of the Hindus of medieval Bihar was based on the system of 'Varṇāśram' described earlier. Long before the Muslim conquest, many social groups, castes or Jātis had developed out of the four Aryan varṇas, each having definite duties and somewhat distinct ways of life. It is difficult to give the exact number, but roughly there were about a hundred castes in early medieval society. A 15th century Italian traveller, Nicolo Conti, who wrote about his experiences in Southern India, gave the number of groups wherein 'no one of one creed will drink, eat or marry with those of others', as 84. With the collapse of Buddhism and the revival of Hinduism, largely as a result of Brāhmaṇical efforts, the stereotyped and stringent forms of the caste system became fully established.

The institution of 'Kulinism', though said to be very ancient, is generally ascribed to the Senas of Bengal and the Karṇāṭa rulers of Mithilā, who were staunch supporters of orthodox Hinduism, and flourished before Islām found a firm lodgement in these parts of eastern India. The Brāhmaṇas of Mithilā are credited with having kept alive the orthodox traditions of caste. In pre-Moghal India, they were not directly under Muslim rule and had their own Rajas and Chiefs, many of whom were Brāhmaṇas. Medieval Maithil society prided itself on its purity and was singularly free from Buddhistic influence. Perhaps the Brāhmaṇas of Mithilā deliberately attempted to weed out some of the social practices and customs which had crept in during the prevalence of Buddhism in Magadha and elsewhere. There was a very old tradition there in Mithilā of looking down upon the people of Magadha as impure. It is significant that a journey to Magadha, Vaṅga and Kaliṅga, where Buddhism still lingered, was normally forbidden to a Maithil. Fresh initiation was necessary when one went southward across the Ganges, except in the

case of those who went to perform Tīrtha Jātrā, to offer 'Pinda', and celebrate the 'Śrādh' of their ancestors at Gaya.

As regards the tightening of the social system, the Brāhmaṇa legists wrote various glosses on the Smṛitis containing elaborate rules regarding daily duties, the five Yajñas and other rites, social practices of varṇas, food, dress, marriage, inheritance, purificatory ceremonies from birth to death, and so on. Relations between castes and social groups were governed by rules of endogamy. The taking of cooked food outside caste groups was interdicted, the pursuit of hereditary professions was insisted upon, and different classes were discouraged from living together. Kulinism led to excessive orthodoxy and empty formalism. Burdensome restrictions and invidious distinctions created a barrier between man and man. Violation of the rules of caste involved social ostracism. Excessive regard for the supposed purity of blood was responsible for the systematic practice of keeping genealogies and family records called Pañjikās. The idea of Kulinism received a fresh impetus and a new class of Pañjikārs and Ghataks arose.

The Brāhmaṇas, the dominant class, had their own classifications on the basis of Gotras, Śākhās and Pravaras. The main caste had virtually branched out into sub-castes. People of different Gotras and Pravaras claiming descent from some distant Ṛishi or sage ancestor became endogamous sects. Of course, there was no bar to marriage merely on the ground of residence in different territories. The second wife of Chaitanya Dev was a Maithil lady, but there is no record of intermarriage between the Magadhan and the Maithil Brāhmaṇas.

The system of Gotra was copied by other classes also. But the Kshatriya ruling aristocracy, whose conversion into Rajputs had taken place long ago, attached much more importance to 'Kula' or 'Vaṅśa' or family than to 'Gotra'. We note the formation of castes among the Rajputs as well. Many of them in Bihar, both in the north and the south, were immigrants and some of them were named after their original place of abode. Such were the Karṇāṭas of North Bihar and the Ujjainias of South Bihar. The latter were Parmar Rajputs. The 14th century author of *Varṇa-Ratnākara* has given a list of Rajputs which included such well known modern names as Parmars, Chauhans, Kachchawahas, Chandels, Baiswara, Guhilots, Bhatti and so on.

More numerous than the Rajputs and third in the social order were the Vaiśyas, who may be called commoners. They consisted of

merchants, craftsmen, breeders of cattle, tillers of earth, lenders of money and so on. Agriculture was the chief occupation of the Vaiśyas in the earlier period, but in medieval times they appear as traders and craftsmen as well. They were wealthy and prosperous and yet of humble status. To them belonged the credit of promoting the economic prosperity of the land. Like the Rajputs, they were also not very particular about the use of Gotras and among them the process of division and sub-divisions had started long ago. In between them and the low-caste people such as aborigines and untouchables, with no rights and many disabilities, came the various intermediate and mixed castes which did not belong to any 'Varṇa' but formed distinct 'Jātis'.

The people in the lowest rung of the social order were of two kinds, Anirvāsita or the non-excluded, and Nirvāsita, the excluded ones. This division is first found in Pāṇini's grammar (*c.* 300 B.C.). The Nirvāsitas were outside the pale of Hindu society and may be identified with untouchables. Jyotiriśwar Thākur (14th century) has given us a list of 'Maṅda Jātias'. They include such modern names as Gowar (Gowālā), Dhāngar, Dhanri, Chai, Bind, Tombol (betel-sellers) Chāndāl, Dhunias, Telis, Tāṅtīs, Turia (vegetable-sellers), Nat, Dom, Chāmār, and so on.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Varṇa-Ratnākara which has been described by Dr S. K. Chatterjee as a compendium of life and culture in medieval India, gives us a glimpse into the social and cultural life of 14th century Mithilā and Bihar. The author tells us about the luxury and appalling poverty, the old and established notions and institutions, the oddities and frivolities, the life in a Hindu court, the social inequality, the cults and devotees and so on. We often feel prone to attribute the thoughts and attitudes of a people to foreign domination. But the atmosphere of *Varṇa-Ratnākara*, according to its learned Bengali editor, 'is purely Hindu and pre-Muhammadan, although it was composed a little over a century after the establishment of the Turkish power in Northern India.' Jyotiriśwar Thākur gives, on the whole, a vivid picture of city life, kings and subjects, Aryans and Mlechchas, poets and singers, castes and classes. But he does not say much about the people of the rural areas.

Slavery of a sort, and prostitution, were prevalent in the social order both of Hindus and the Muslims. Vidyāpati tells us of both in

describing his experience of Jaunpur in *Kīrtilatā*. The Dāsas or slaves in Hindu society consisted more of those reduced to slavery for crimes and debt than people captured or vanquished in wars as among the Muslims.

The status and education of women cannot be said to have improved during this period. Satī was rare but recognized as a custom. The lot of widows was unenviable and very hard, though the austerities were voluntary. Admittedly there were a few educated ladies, but it cannot be said that any particular attention was paid to their education. Though the purdāh of the Muslim brand came later and was adopted by high-caste Hindus who were specially connected with the court, the custom of 'ghungut' (veil) continued to hold ground.

DRESS AND MANNERS

Married women whose husbands were alive (sohāgin) used 'sindur' (vermilion) at the parting of the hair, collyrium in the eyes, and colour on the soles, palms, and tips of the fingers; they were fond of flowers, ornaments and costumes; they coloured their lips red and strengthened their teeth by the use of betel leaves. Ornaments of gold and precious stones were worn by those who could afford them and women of ordinary position wore silver ornaments and beads, and tattooed their arms. Women were not used to footwear. Costumes differed with different classes. The priestly class, clad scantily, were very particular about cleanliness and in avoiding sewn clothes, especially on occasions of religious observances. Their 'dhotis' had a counterpart in the 'saries' worn by the women, but the saries were larger in size, draping the upper as well as the lower part of the body. Petticoats were not in general use, nor any breast-garments or tight-fitting bodices except the 'choli'. In Mithilā unmarried girls used a kind of 'lahanga', the 'ghangra' and the 'kanchuki', a kind of bodice or jacket. The general dress of the people was the traditional 'dhoti' and 'chādar' and a 'pugree'. But the nobles, warriors, merchants, and kings favoured more clothing, richer apparel, and varied types of dress. They wore clothes of silken stuff and velvet shoes. A tight-fitting garment, later termed the Kanchol or corselet, fastened at the back with a ribbon, was a favourite dress of women in affluent circumstances. Even when men wore 'aṅgarkha' they used laces as fastenings near the neck and on the chest and sides.

Contemporary paintings of *Chandaban*, the Hindi poem dealing

with the romantic love of Chanda and Lorik composed by the 14th century Maulānā Dāūd, depict the hero as naked to the waist with no shoes and having 'kuṅdala' in his ears. The heroine wears a 'churi', armlets and necklace and other ornaments and has a 'sari' and a close-fitted garment on the upper part of the body. There is something like a scarf on the head. In another picture the hero wears trousers with a waistband and footwear resembling boots when he is at the wars. The lower garment of the heroine looks like a 'sari' pleated in front and held with a long girdle. As regards footwear, Dharmaswāmī says that when he was first seen wearing boots but speaking Sanskrit fluently, he was taken by the Magadhans to be an impostor. He says that the shoes worn by some of the natives had leather soles attached to the feet above by straps with no sidepieces or leggings. They were something like 'chappals'.

The author of *Varṇa-Ratnākara* has told us of a high-class feast and the ceremonials observed on the occasion. He says that 'chewrah' of a very fine variety of rice (parched) with a heavy coat of thick curd and cream, and buttermilk and also a variety of sweets were served. But we must reserve all these things for more detailed consideration later as the habits of the people regarding dress, diet and so on have changed very little.

FESTIVALS

The 14th century Mithilā scholar-statesman, Chandreśwar Thākur, has given a long list of festivals in his book *Kṛitya-Ratnākar*, which agrees largely with that furnished earlier by Lakshmidhar, the chief minister of the Gaharwar ruler, Govind Chandra, in his book *Kṛitya-Kalpataru*. Of these the first three, celebrated in the month of Jeth and marking birth of the Rewati, are no longer observed. Such also is the case, perhaps with the present unpopularity of the 'Pujās', with Bhadrakāli, apparently a Tāṅtric deity (Asin 8). Others mentioned are, Gauri Pujā (Magh), Durgā Brat (Savan 12), Durgā Rath (Bhadon 9), Varāha Dwādashi (Magh 3), Narasiṁha Dwādashi (Phagun 12), Buddha Dwādashi (Savan 12), Matsya Dwādashi (Magh 12), Rāsa Kalyān (Magh 3), and the worship of weapons, flags and so on (Asin 8). The last was confined to the Kshatriyas and was called Mahāśtami or Nishā Pujā. The 'Udak Śaiva Mahotsava' was celebrated on Asin 14, and the description given of promiscuous mass gatherings at night with obscene and vulgar practices shows that it was performed by Tāṅtric worshippers;

Vināyak Pujā was performed in honour of Ganeśa, the elephant-headed deity, son of Mahādeva; Bhāskar Pujā and sun-worship took place in Asarh. As for the rest, we are already familiar with Kṛishṇa (Janam) Aśtami (Bhadon 8), Nāg Pañchami (Savan 5), Śiva Chaturdashi (Śivarātri), and Śri Pañchami (Basant Pañchami). There was a festival specially observed by the Brāhmaṇas and called 'Yama Dwitīyā' and it fell on the same day of Kārtik when the Kāyasthas perform their Dawat Pujā. The car festivals of Śiva and Durgā mentioned by Chandreśwar are no longer popular in Bihar. Alberuni also makes no mention of these, but he and Gurdezi mention the festivals of Swing or Hindola (Dol Jātrā), Mahānavami, 'Pitṛi Paksha', Ahoi (now confined to Marwaris), Puhai and so on, which do not find a place in the list of Chandreśwar. Gauri Pujā, specially observed by women on Magh 3 and mentioned by Alberuni, was perhaps the same as that called Gauri Tṛitīyā. Alberuni and Gurdezi refer to yet another important festival called Diwali.

Muslim Social Life

The pre-Moghal Muslim society in Bihar and elsewhere was fairly well organized and homogeneous. There is little or no trace of religious schism and sectarian differences between the Sunnīs and the Shiās. The unifying force of Islām made the foreign settlers, the ruling and aristocratic classes, theologians or Ulemas, mystic saints and Sūfīs and even those who became converts, one integrated whole. The social constitution of the Muslims recognized two broad divisions 'Ahl-i-Saif' (men of the sword) and 'Ahl-i-Qalam' (men of the pen). Besides the rulers and military people such as Muqtis, Amīrs, Diwāns, Kotwāls, Maliks, Sepahsalars, Shāhnas, and Perganadārs who ran the provincial and local administration, there were Imāms, Qāzīs, Khatibs, Muhtasibs and Ulemas, and Mashaikhs or the theologians and religious leaders who were in charge of ecclesiastical and judicial functions and looked after the moral and religious, as well as the educational, needs of the people. The oft-quoted Arabic expression 'La Rahpaniata Fil Islām' means that there is no priesthood in Islām, and Muslim society was theoretically casteless. But, as we shall see later, the democratic fraternity could not escape the contagion of social distinction in its Indian environment.

The Saiyids, who claimed descent from the Prophet of Islām, and the saints called Shaikhs, Pirs, and Makhdums and their descendants known as Shaikhzadah, Makhdumzadah, Pirzadah, were so highly esteemed

and even venerated that a critical Muslim writer has described them as the 'Brāhmaṇas of Islām'. The respect paid to them is evident from the way in which they have been frequently referred to in the Malfuzats or table talks of the saints of Bihar, compiled by their disciples. There was another element, the commonalty of Muslim society, consisting of various classes of people such as artisans, craftsmen, petty traders, clerks, domestic servants and slaves and a large section of converted Muslims. The student community appears to have been a vocal section of Muslim society, often agitating and demonstrating against what it considered unlawful and heterodox practices. There was a type of religious zealot called Majzub, Diwānā and Qalandars. The first two were religious recluses and the Qalandars were described as those who had their heads, eyebrows, and beards clean-shaven and were quite oblivious of the obligatory duties of Islām. There were also Muwallahs (distracted with love) with strange practices of their own, not abstaining even from forbidden drinks. Unfortunately the information about them, specially about an institution so important and common among the Muslims as slavery and about the large mass of ordinary classes, including the converts, is very scanty in the religious literature of Bihar.

It is only occasionally that we come across such people as chakars, nafars, khadims (servants, attendants), jaria and kaniz (slave girls and female servants), nalain doz (shoe-makers), and parah doz (patchers, tailors). There is an interesting reference in *Bahr-ul-Maani* to Muslims being employed as servants by the Hindus. Qāzī Shamsud-dīn of Khokar asked the great Saint of Bihar if a Muslim was justified in addressing a non-Muslim as Thakkar (Thākur) and he was told that the word meant 'Kundkar' and 'Khudawand' (lord and master) and not God, and therefore there could be no objection. When the student community at Sonargāon agitated against the use of lime for betel leaves prepared out of oyster shell on the ground of its being a 'bone', the saint of Bihar approved the action of those who refused to declare it as forbidden for 'the path of Islām is very wide for all and God's creatures had become accustomed to the practice.' (*Khani-Pur Niamat*, dated 1348).

There are many references to the social catholicity and liberal outlook of the Sūfī saints and to their readiness to help the needy and the indigent, to whatever class or faith they might belong. The compiler of *Ganj-i-La Yafna* (1359) once asked the Saint of Bihar whether 'charity' distributed by 'kāfirs' (infidels) would be taken

into account by God on the Day of Judgement, and he got a reply in the affirmative. It is recorded in *Munis-ul-Muridin* that the use of 'shangarf' (vermilion) by Muslim women in imitation of Hindu ladies was not tantamount to 'kufr' or infidelity, if they used it to beautify their person to please their husbands. But when questioned about the sprinkling of 'shangarh' on the body in the fashion of the Hindus on the occasion of the annual saturnalia of Holi, the saint said that as the practice appeared to be an article of Hindu faith, the Muslims should not indulge in it. The saint once observed, 'Infidelity and faith, orthodoxy and heresy, are all technical terms of differentiation. All (including Hindus) deserved favours and concessions. One should entertain friendship and affection for all. There is no such thing as absolute opposition or enmity, for these are relative terms.' He added further that 'all are God's creations.'

One of the first things that the Sūfī saints did to find an entrance into the hearts of the natives was to learn and know their language so as to make their views and arguments intelligible and acceptable to them.

INFLUENCE OF INDIAN CUSTOMS, MANNERS AND BELIEFS

H. Sharf-ud-dīn was very fond of Indian betel leaves. Trays full of them were usually taken round for distribution in his 'Majlis' or assemblies. At the close of certain ceremonies, rose-water was sprinkled and betel leaves and 'sharbat' (soft drinks) were distributed among those who were present. When a child was born to a disciple, he used to approach the saint to 'name' it. Once he sent to Safarābād (Jaunpur) his own 'pairahan' (loose vest or shirt) and 'kulah' (a cap) from which suitable clothes might be made and put on the new-born babe, Hasan Balkhi, on the 'sixth day'. This reminds one of the modern 'Chathi' ceremony.

Referring to the oppressive dowry system which was being imitated by the Muslims, the Saint related that Caliph Harun-al-Rashid ordered the Qāzī to fix his own daughter's dowry at 100 'dirhams' less than what was fixed by the Prophet for his daughter, Fatima, when she was married to Ali. The great Saint of Bihar was asked whether the practices in 'their marriage ceremonies which have become so common now and which are attended by men and women' had any precedent. The reply was that 'the assemblage of people did take place and whatever was ready at hand was placed before the guests. They sat for a time and then left for their homes. There

was no trace of these extremes (Mubaligaha).' In the 43rd Majlis of 757 (A.D. 1357) (K.P.N.) the discourses of the saint suddenly switched on to some of the unwarranted beliefs and practices that had crept into Muslim circles. He observed, 'I find several things which have grown up among the Musulmans which I cannot account for or trace the origin of. As for example, women generally do not burn the skin of Sir (garlic) and piyaz (onion) within their houses under the belief that it leads to poverty. Similarly I have heard that some people say that one ought not to sit at the doorway of the house for that brings in indigence. Again I have been in some houses and places where people are very particular in not using the broom for cleaning their houses at night lest it might involve them in 'Darweshi' (mendicancy). I have not seen in any book about the prohibition of taking Joghrat (coagulated milk, curd or whey) on the 27th of the month.'

FOOD, DRINK AND CLOTHING

As regards food and drink, utensils and dress and other such things, the little that we know is largely about the saints and only occasionally about others. The saints tried to lead very simple lives and to follow in the footsteps of the earliest leaders of Islām, including the Prophet himself. Of course, in Sūfī literature there are references to feasts at which prayer was offered and food was served. A number of dishes, especially sweetmeats, and fruits are mentioned. In the early literature of the Sūfīs, we find no reference to highly rich and spicy foods and utensils of gold and silver. The wearing of silk, jewels like lal (ruby) and even rings of gold and silver by male Muslims was denounced. The saints abstained from anything that could be considered a luxury and among the things they generally ate were bhāt, conkhichri, nan (bread), green vegetables, meat and soup, barley and rice gruel. The special garments of the Sūfīs and others consisted of jubba (a kind of long vest worn beneath the shirt), qaba (a tight-fitting tunic), amama (head-dress), moza (socks) and so on; but ordinarily they wore the pairahan (a long shirt), izar (trousers), dastar (a turban), kulah (cap) and also the taqia (a special head-dress) and latiba (skull-cap), rida (a wrapper), shawls of black wool, dotai (double shirt) and barani (overcoat used in winter), fetuhi mirzai and sadri. They wore shoes and wooden sandals. The 15th century Shuttari saint of Bania Basarh has drawn a pen-picture of pseudo-saints who posed as Shaikhs and learned recluses and used

to wrap themselves in 'hazar mekhi' 'mush dândani' or 'moraqqa' (rugs called 'gudri' closely stitched and made of threads and patches). Most of the garments used were white but the turbans were either black or greenish in colour. They avoided dhut (dhoti) but not salu or tahmad (a cloth worn round the waist, and passing between the legs). The utensils referred to are the sahnak (plate) and badhna (water-pot) made of clay ('gileen'). When the great saint became too old to walk, he had to use the Indian dola as a means of conveyance. Though sabun (soap) was in use, they used clay to wash their hair, which they wore long and called 'zulf'.

Women wore veils, sarawail (loose trousers like shalwar), dira and mijwal (a kind of shirt worn by unmarried girls) and khimar and jilbab (a kind of scarf worn over the head when out of doors) to conceal the face. They sometimes used the qasaba (a handkerchief tied round the head) while the men wore a tilsan like the Arabs. They also used footwear. Upper-class Muslim ladies were educated up to a certain stage. They read religious books but they were not taught to write. Ibn Batutah also refers to his Indian wife, who came of a highly respected family and who was a very pious and devout lady, well read in the scriptures but unable to write. We read about many saintly women, and of one of them the Saint of Bihar said that she was a great lady and had received so much 'Niãmat' (spiritual benefits) that she was called a 'Shaikh' (a venerable leader). Women did not mix with men, but they attended religious functions like 'Urs' (religious fairs) and witnessed things from behind the curtain. They plied the 'charkha' or spinning wheel and performed other domestic duties.

C. Education, Science, Languages and Literature

Before the Muslim penetration into Bihar, the systems of education prevailing were Brãhmaṇical and Buddhistic. Both aimed at acquisition of knowledge and formation of character. The number of educational institutions in the Brãhmaṇical Age was not small and the schools were varied in character. They ranged from private institutions maintained by Gurus in their own houses, to institutions financially supported and maintained by rich patrons or by the government. Generally, education was free, students had not to pay any tuition fees and they were, in addition, supplied with free

board and lodging. In some cases, however, rich students hadto pay fees.

Brāhmaṇical education began at the age of six or eight and was imparted through Sanskrit. The studentship continued for twelve years. The boy took to reading the first book containing the forty-nine letters of the alphabet and ten thousand syllables in three hundred slokas. This primer was to be finished in the course of six months, after which the boy had to study consecutively the sūtras of Pāṇinī's grammar containing one thousand slokas, the books on Dhātu, on the three Khilas, the Kārika or the commentaries on Pāṇinī Sūtra, containing eighteen thousand slokas composed by Jayāditya. Having acquired a mastery over the Kārika, the scholar turned to the study of composition, logic and philosophy, as well as the five vidyās, including Śabda vidyā, Śilpasthāna vidyā (arts), Chikitsā vidyā, Hetu vidyā and Adhyātma vidyā. When the scholar had mastered these, his elementary and general education was said to have been completed. He then took to higher and specialized studies.

Mithilā, the stronghold of Brāhmaṇical culture, had its own system of education. It will be interesting to note how education was imparted in those days. The students studied at the feet of their teachers in humble cottages thatched with straw. They sat on mats made of grass. The teachers as well as their pupils were embodiments of simplicity, but they discussed most intricate subjects which baffle even modern scholars. The system of examination was also extremely severe. A student was supposed to be proficient in his subject after he had passed the śalākā parīkshā. This test consisted of inserting a needle (śalākā) between the leaves of a book and asking the examinee to explain extempore the contents of the pages where the book opened. Consequently, the student had to keep everything ready on the tip of his tongue.

This system continued under Mithilā's Hindu kings from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. Under the patronage of the rulers of the Karṇāṭaka dynasty (1150 to 1395) and its successor, the Kameśwar dynasty (up to 1515), the cultural heritage was maintained intact. From Epic times, Mithilā produced scholars of fame, and scholarship there was always held in high esteem. This has been corroborated by Vidyāpati Thākur (13th century) in his work known as *Kīrtilatā*.

The Buddhist system of education has already been dealt with and it hardly survived during this period. The Muslim conquest of Bihar

almost sounded the death-knell of monastic institutions in the region, as most of the monasteries were destroyed. All the institutions at Pāṭaliputra, Rājgṛiha, Nālandā, Gaya, Monghyr, Champā and Vikramśilā met the same fate and thus lost all their importance as centres of education and culture.

The first task of the conquerors after gaining a strong foothold was to raise masjids at different places, most of which had a maqtab or a madrasa attached to them to provide instruction in the Three Rs, as well as higher education through their own mother tongue, Arabic, Turkī, or Persian. It was at these institutions that young Muslims received elementary and higher education as well as military training. Bakhtiyār Khaljī is said to have established maqtabs and madrasas in different parts of Bihar and particularly at Biharsharif, his chief centre of military operations.

In course of time, there grew up many educational institutions. Among the renowned madrasas located in Bihar during the Turco-Afghan and post-Turco-Afghan period mention may be made of the following: the madrasas of Makhdum Sharf-ud-dīn Yahiya, Ahmad Chiramposh (of Ambair), Sheikh Badh Sūfī, Malikku-ulema, Sheikh Abdur Nabi (son of Sheikh Badh) and Qāzī Abdus Shekur at Maner Sherif; Yahiya and Chiramposh were noted for their erudition in poetry and theology and commanded the respect not only of scholars of neighbouring countries but also of Fīrūz Tughluq, the Turco-Afghan Sultan of Delhi, who was a lover of learning. The madrasas of Qāzī Ziaullah at Mohalla Mirdar, Biharsharif, of Shamsul Huq, alias Buddha Haqqani, at Bazidpur near Barh in Patna district, those of Mullā Mansoor Danishmand and of Mullā Abdus Sami at Rajgir, that of Amīr Ataullah Zainabi at Phulwarisharif and the madrasas of Mullā Shafi and Mullā Afaq at Amuthu, have been notably mentioned.

The school system of the Muslims prevalent during the period 1206 to 1526 and even later, required that every child, after learning his alphabets and vocabulary, should read the *Holy Quran* under a Muqri, i.e. one who knew how to read it. Next, the student had to read literature, romance, history and ethics. He made himself conversant with such works as *Pandnāmāh*, *Amudnāmāh*, *Gulistān*, *Bostān*, *Jamiul Qawānin*, *Ruqqat Amānullah Hussaini*, *Bāhardānesh-Sikandarnāmāh* and so on. Those who stopped at this stage were given the title of Munshi. But others who continued further were called Maulvi, Maulānā or Fazil, befitting the standard and nature of learning that

they had acquired. Those who studied Arabic had to read, in addition, works on the life and teaching of the Prophet Muhammad, and commentaries on *The Quran*, Aqaid, Tasawwuf, Logic, Philosophy and Ilm-e-Kalam.

Students were given free education and were supplied with food, clothing and books by zealous patrons of learning. The teachers everywhere kept open the gate of education. Every man of means supported at least one student. The work entitled *Sirat-i-Fīrūzshāhi*, composed in the fourteenth century, provides among other things a catalogue of wordly advice supposed to have been given by Sultan Fīrūz Tughluq to his officials concerning the line of action that the official should pursue in private life. One piece of such advice is, 'all should secure knowledge and learning for themselves and should not neglect to educate their fellow Muslims. The knowledge that is acquired must not be forgotten but brushed up by constant discussion. Learning should be imparted to the deserving only.' Thus, guided by the prevailing idea of the time, the lawyers, judges and even administrative officers and physicians welcomed earnest students and gave them instruction suited to their aptitude. Even during the reign of the Turkish slave-sultan Balban, high officials like Mustaufiul Mamalik and Shamsul Malik spared no pains to render all help to seekers of knowledge. All those occupying high stations in life spent their spare time in teaching, and when they had finished reading a book, could not rest contented till they had explained the subject-matter to others who had not read it. There was, besides, no dearth of persons who would collect rare and valuable manuscripts and give them free to students or would engage calligraphists to transcribe manuscripts and, when the transcription work was completed, to place it at the disposal of scholars. In addition to private accommodation provided for students by the rich, the government ran boarding houses. Here the meals supplied were satisfactory and at times, we are told, rather rich.

In the madrasas, individual care was taken. Sometimes the boy at the top, known as Moid, explained his own ideas to his class-mates; this was followed by further discussion, with the teacher rounding off the debate by making his own observations. This method of training was generally called Edu.

The system of examination was simple. At the time of test discussions, candidates who showed their worth were declared successful. The fortunate candidate had then to appear before an assembly of

Ulemas and go through a ceremony called 'Rasm-i-dastarbandi', which was something like a convocation. The main item of the function was to fasten at urban on the head of the successful candidate, who was thus raised to the rank of a Ulema or a Sheikh.

During the Turco-Afghan period, the study of the sciences was not neglected. Learning, in the fourteenth century and later, consisted of acquiring knowledge in theology, politics, astronomy, astrology, physiology, medicine, zoology and veterinary science. The study of different branches of science not only affected the lives of the people of Delhi and the neighbouring lands but also influenced the people of Bihar, which formed a component part of the Turco-Afghan empire. There is, however, no material at our disposal to prove how far Bihar made practical use of science and what branch of science it specialized in.

There was some development in the field of mechanics also. During the reign of Fīrūz Tughluq, a new type of clock was invented which, according to the author of *Nuzhatu Khawatir*, used to broadcast every hour, by sounding a bell that was kept in the Sultan's palace, reminding the people that their life was shorter by that hour!

Sultan Fīrūz Tughluq loved gardening and laid out numerous gardens in his empire with trees of various kinds, indigenous and foreign. This led to the development of the art of gardening and horticulture throughout the empire.

Beginning as a work on political history, the *Sirat-i-Fīrūzshāhi*, a rare work found only in manuscript form, refers in its fourth chapter to the sciences, such as astronomy, astrology, physiology, and medicine, besides giving a description of the equipment of war used in those days. This book also contains a short discussion of the different seasons of the year, of the characteristics of the signs of the zodiac and of the anatomy of the human body. It deals with, and prescribes medicines for, diseases like insanity, sleeplessness, epilepsy, pain in the eye, cholera, dyspepsia, colic pain, stone in the bladder, worms, piles, disordered spleen and so on.

The fact that the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air were domesticated and trained for household use and for hunting, led to greater interest in the study of zoology. *Shikārnāmāh-i-Fīrūzshāhi*, an undiscovered work but referred to in *Sirat-i-Fīrūzshāhi*, deals with the various diseases of animals and prescribes remedies for them. It describes the method of catching and training hawks and falcons and

discusses the reproduction of birds, their physical characteristics and their manner of breeding and of rearing their young.

As a treatise on animal diseases, *Shikārnāmāh* sets forth disorders in the system of falcons, such as catarrh, dry scab, wounds, and others. It also prescribes remedies for diseases of panthers and dogs used in hunting deer.

In addition to what has been mentioned before, the author of *Shikārnāmāh* has particularized the season best suited for hunting. It is very interesting to note that he classifies animals according to the manner they are influenced by the planets, dividing them into four categories related to the influence of the governing planet constituting the sign of the zodiac. Some animals are influenced by Aries, some by Cancer, some by Taurus, some by Gemini, and so on. The twelve signs of the zodiac fall under four classes, according to their properties, namely, fire, earth, air and water.

Sanskrit Language and Literature

Sanskrit continued to be the language of culture and the *lingua franca* of the learned throughout India. The regional languages, no doubt, had already begun to develop as media for literature, apart from the folk-songs and other forms which were far older and wide-spread among the masses. The development of the regional languages however, was mostly on the pattern of Sanskrit literature, from which the former freely borrowed literary forms as well as imagery. The vocabulary of the regional languages was also enriched by Sanskrit words, many of which were modified in the process of adoption.

The period covered by this section was undoubtedly a fruitful epoch of literary activity. With the destruction of the Nālandā and Vikramśilā Universities, the centre of scholarship shifted to northern Bihar or Mithilā, which, with its age-long traditions of learning, was able to make considerable contribution to literature. Unlike southern Bihar, Mithilā continued to be under Hindu rule, though its kings were very often the feudatories of the Muslim kings and emperors. The rulers, whether kings or queens, of both the Karṇāṭa and Oinawār dynasties who were in power during this period, were usually patrons of learning. It is indeed creditable to them that in spite of their long and continuous struggle with the Muslim power, they found time to take an interest in scholarship and literature. Sanskrit Pandits (like Bhaṭṭaśarmā of Gaya in *c.* A.D. 1500) would very often

travel to their courts to seek patronage and recognition. Mithilā Pandits of this age did not feel very enthusiastic about pursuing the studies of astronomy, mathematics or āyurveda. Their interest in classical literature and philosophy was also lukewarm. Dharmaśāstra and Nyāya seem to have been their chief concern and they made fairly remarkable contributions in both these subjects. It would not be possible to enumerate either the names of scholars or of their works here in this book; we shall draw the attention of our readers only to some outstanding contributions.

To begin with classical Sanskrit literature, we may first mention the famous poet Vidyāpati (14th century). He is of course a greater figure in Maithilī literature than in the sphere of classical Sanskrit. But his contribution to the latter also is worthy of note. His works *Bhūparikramā* and *Purusha-Parikshā* are diadactic in nature but are noteworthy for the subjects they treat. His *Likhanāvalī* acquaints us with the ideas of the age about literary compositions. There are not many works of this class in Sanskrit literature. Similarly *Panchasāyaka* and *Raṅgaśekhara* of Jyotirīśwar Thākur deal with erotics and are often referred to. *Gaurīdīgambaraprahasana* by Śaṅkara Miśra (*c.* 1450) is a small comedy on the marriage of Pārvati with Śaṅkara. Jyotirīśwar's *Dhūrtasamāgama* deals with an aspect of life not frequently dealt with by Sanskrit writers. *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī* and *Śaiva-sarvasva* deal with the devotional side of life and show that Vidyāpati was a Śaiva in his religious persuasion. A number of commentaries were written by Mithilā Pandits on famous Sanskrit works; we may mention here one on *Kāvyaprakāśa* by Achyuta (*c.* 1400) another on *Mṛichchhakaṭikā* by Prithvīdhara and a third one on *Amarakosha* by Śrīkara Āchārya.

In the realm of philosophy, the contribution of Mithilā of this period is not striking. A number of works were written but they are all of secondary importance. Śaṅkara Miśra was a great dualist (dvaitin) and has attacked the position of Advaita Vedānta in *Bhedaprakāśa* and *Advaitadhikkāra*. Two commentaries were written on Śrī Harsha's famous work *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādya*, one by Śaṅkara Miśra and the other by Vāchaspati Miśra (1450). Śaṅkara Miśra also wrote *Vaiśeshika-sūtropaskāra*, a popular commentary on the Sūtras of Kaṇāḍa. We may also mention here the *Dvaitaviveka* of Vibhākara (*c.* 1500).

In the sphere of Dharmaśāstra, Mithilā produced a number of authors, among whom Chaṇḍeśvara and Vāchaspati Miśra (the

younger) were undoubtedly most important. Of these, Chaṇḍeśvara was not only a scholar but also an administrator; he was the Foreign Minister and Chief Judge in the court of the last great ruler Harisiṁha Deva (*c.* 1305-1330) of the Karṇāṭa dynasty. The traditional inverse proportion between scholarship and wealth did not hold good in his case; on one occasion he weighed himself against gold and distributed the yellow metal in charity. His work on Dharmaśāstra is known as *Smṛiti-Ratnākara* and is divided into seven sections dealing with Kṛitya, Dāna, Vyāvahāra, Śuddhi, Pujā, Vivāda and Gārhasthya. Of these, the most famous is the *Vivāda-Ratnākara*, which deals with civil and personal law and covers about 670 pages in print. As the British courts recognized this work as authoritative for Mithilā, it has been also translated into English. The *Rājaniti-Ratnākara*, dealing with polity, is also an interesting work and has been published, by the late Dr K. P. Jayaswal.

Vāchaspati Miśra, the younger, who flourished in the latter half of the 15th century, was a prolific writer and is credited with dozens of works. His *magnum opus*, known as *Chintāmaṇi*, is divided into eleven parts; Āhnika, Śuddhi, Kṛitya, Tīrtha, Nīti, Vivāda, Śrāddha are some of the topics dealt with in the different sections. His *Vivāda-Chintāmaṇi*, which has been translated into English by Prasanna Kumar Tagore, was accepted as most authoritative for Mithilā even by the Privy Council. It is interesting to note that this book gives several vernacular equivalents for Sanskrit technical terms. Besides these Chintāmaṇis, Vāchaspati has written other works on Dharmaśāstra like *Dvaitanirṇaya*, *Tithinirṇaya*, *Mahādānanirṇaya* and others.

Vardhamāna Upādhyāya, a pupil of Vāchaspati Miśra, also wrote some works on Dharmaśāstra like *Smṛititatvaviveka*, *Dānaviveka* and so on. He was a judge or Dharmādhikārin under king Bhairava Siṅha (*c.* 1485 to *c.* 1515).

If there was any branch of study that may be described as the *forte* of Mithilā during this period, it was undoubtedly Nyāya. The literary activity in this sphere was intense and continuous throughout the period. The Mithilā school of Navya Nyāya, or New Logic, was founded towards the end of the 12th century by the famous Naiyāyika, Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya, whose work *Tattva Chintāmaṇi* marks the beginning of a new epoch in the history of medieval logic. A Sanskrit scholar who has not studied this work is not regarded worth the name in Mithilā. Its study undoubtedly helps the reader to be a good and subtle debater and enables him to draw hair-splitting distinctions.

The work soon began to be closely studied in Bengal and became popular with the Pandits of Kashmir, Maharashtra and South India. Its text hardly covers 300 pages, but it has been estimated that the commentaries written upon it may cover 1,00,000 pages! Among the commentators in Mithilā, we may mention Vardhamāna Upādhyāya, the son of the author (1250), Pakshadhara Miśra (1450), Vasudeva Miśra (1450), Śaṅkara Miśra (1525), Miśaru Miśra (1525), Bhagīratha and Maheśa Thākur (1550). Among these, Maheśa Thākur was the founder of the Darbhanga Raj family. He acquired the zamindari from his pupil Raghunāthadāsa Rāya as his Guru-dakshiṇā, the latter having previously received it as a gift from Akbar.

A number of other works on Nyāya were written during this period, mostly of the nature of commentaries. Among these may be mentioned *Nyāyapariśishtaprakāśa* (a commentary on Udayanāchārya's *Nyāya-pariśishta*, *Kiraṇāvaliprakāśa*, *Nyāyakusumāñjaliprakāśa* by Vardhamāna Upādhyāya, *Dravyapadārtha* by Pakshadhara, and so on. Pakshadhara was a versatile writer and he is credited with the authorship of 22 works, mostly on Nyāya and poetics. His commentary on the *Tattva Chintāmaṇi* is the fountain source of the huge literature on Navya Nyāya. He also wrote a drama named *Prasannarāghava* and a book on poetics named *Chandrāloka*.

The Mithilā school of logic declined towards the end of the 16th century, but not before enkindling a fresh enthusiasm for the subject in the Nadia school of logic through its two famous alumni, Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma (1450 to 1525) and Raghunātha Śiromaṇi (1477 to 1547).

This review of Mithilā's contribution to Sanskrit literature no doubt shows that much of its literary activity was of a secondary nature; most of the works were of the nature of digests and commentaries. But this was the case almost everywhere else in India. Its contribution in the realm of Dharmaśāstra and Nyāya was substantial and secured a place of honour to medieval Mithilā, by no means inferior to that of Vārānasi. Nadia's school of logic derived its inspiration to a very great extent from Mithilā, as pointed out already. Mithilā served as a golden link between India on one side and Nepal and Tibet on the other, where a number of Buddhist scholars had migrated after the destruction of Nālandā and Vikramśilā, as is evidenced by the account (1234-36) of the Tibetan pilgrim Dharmaswāmī.

Maithili Language and Literature

The period from 1206 to 1526 is very important in the history of Maithili as it flowered at the hands of outstanding figures like Jyotirīśwar Thākur, Vidyāpati and others. It also registers the triumph of Maithili speech after a long period of struggle. We have no connected history of its development, because of the disturbed conditions of life, but what literature we have, goes to prove the strides it made during the period. Littérateurs of this period made very conscious and deliberate efforts to develop this language and its literature.

The conscious development of Maithili literature came in the wake of its progress as a language. It had emerged from Maithili Apabhraṁśa, which has its nearest forms preserved in Siddhacharya padas. The writers had been influenced by the beauty of forms in classical Sanskrit. We come across a host of Sanskrit scholars here during the reigns of the Karṇāṭas and Oinwars. To this period belong such illustrious names as Gaṅgeśa, Padmanābha, Vīreśvara, Chandreśvara, Vidyāpati, Vāchaspati, Śaṅkara, and others. While the Maithili language progressed in form and elasticity, its literature advanced, aiming at high classical standards. The best illustration is the prose work *Varṇa-Ratnākara* (Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta 1940) written by Kaviśekharāchārya Jyotirīśwar Thākur. This work shows that the language had really come into its own and was capable of expressing fine shades of thought and feeling with the aid of simple forms. This simplicity, coupled with the author's power of observation and description of life, make the work a source of literary pleasure. Unfortunately the work is incomplete, with seventeen *folio* missing out of 77 in the original.

The value of the work as a compendium of life in medieval Mithilā, is quite evident. It describes the daily life of a Hindu prince and seeks to give a complete picture of the times, with all its splendour and pomp, ugliness and squalor. Though not a creative work, it proves the literary talents of its author. No other Maithili works by Jyotirīśwar are available but we have his two works in Sanskrit, *Dhūrtasamāgama* (Christian Lassen, Bonn, 1838; C. Cappeller, 1883) a comic play, and *Panchasāyaka*, a work on Kāmaśāstra. *Dhūrtasamāgama* gives some details regarding the poet and his family. He may well be taken to have flourished about the time of Narasiṁha Deva in the 12th-13th centuries A.D.

The avowed purpose of *Varṇa-Ratnākara* could never have been

literary, Dr S. K. Chatterji, in his introduction to the book, has rightly observed. 'The work, it thus appears, is not so much an artistic composition in itself as a collection of clichés, ready-made materials to be utilized in an artistic composition.' But at places, the literary acumen of the author is manifest. Evidently he was possessed of undoubted poetic talents. Indeed his description of the seasons, morning, evening, the moon, a pond, a hero, a heroine etc., not only show his vast knowledge but his literary talents as well:—

Niśāk nāikāk śaṅkhbalaya aisani; ākāś deekshitak kamandal aisan; chandrakāntak prabhā aisan; tarakāk sarthavāh aisan; sṛingār samudrak kallol aisan; kūmūdbanak prāṇ aisan; paschimāchalak tīlak aisan; andhakārak muktīkshetra aisan; kandarpanarendrak yaś aisan; lok lochanak rasāyan aisan; ebambidha chandra udit bhau aha.

(Like the conch-shell bangle of the heroine in the form of Night; like the water-pot of the initiated in the form of Sky; like brilliance of the jewel Chandrakānt; like the group-leader of the Stars; like the waves of the ocean of love; like the life of the jungle of Kumud-flower; like the sign in the forehead of the western mountain; like the salvation-ground of Darkness; like the good name of king Cupid; like the tonic for the eyes of the world; thus has the moon appeared.)

Meghak pāndurata; chāndak nirmalata; hansak pankti; neerak prasannatā; safarik taranga; kāshak kusum; kumudak prakāś; paṇkak ka śosh; śālik namratā; raudrak teekshnatā; pathikak sanchār; narapatik utsāha; prayaṇāk udyoga; padmanālak udgama; matsak vikāś; chakravāk meli; jalak kshaya; akāśak nirmalatā; evamvida anushṇata śītaswavāba śarat desu.

(Paleness of the cloud; stainlessness of the moon; rows of geese; cleanliness of water; wave of small fish; flower of kāsha; blossoming of lilies; drying up of mud; bending of paddy-plant; acuteness of the sun; moving out of travellers; exuberance of kings; preparation for marching; sprouting of a lotus-stem; increase of fishes; meeting of Chakravaka; decrease of water; brilliance of the sky; notice the autumn, free from heat and in nature cold.)

It is indeed a big jump from Jyotiriśwar to Vidyāpati, the greatest name in Maithili literature. With the establishment by Kāmeśwara Thākur of the Oiniwar Dynasty in Mithilā, yet another period of comparative peace began, bringing in a series of

scholars and literateurs who devoted themselves primarily to Sanskrit no doubt, but also to local languages. Prominent among these scholars is Vidyāpati Thākur, a member of the Visaiwara family who gave to Mithilā courts, a successive line of ministers as also of authors of outstanding ability.

Vidyāpati began his life under the patronage of Kīrtisiṁha, in praise of whom he composed his first literary work, *Kīrtilatā* (Pandit Haraprasad Shastri; Calcutta Oriental Press, Bengali year 1331; Kasi Nagari Pracarini Sabha, Sambat 2010), a book in Apabhraṁśa. Evidently by the time of Vidyāpati, Apabhraṁśa was quite current as a class language in addition to Sanskrit.

Apart from a number of compositions of the poet in Sanskrit such as *Purusha-Parīkshā*, *Vibhāgā-Sāra*, and so on, and in Apabhraṁśa such as, *Kīrtilatā* and *Kīrti-Patākā*, we have a number of songs by him in his mother tongue, Maithili. On them specially does his fame as a poet rest. His writings in Maithili belong to the period when he was attached to the court of Śivasiṁhadeva, who was descended from Kīrtisiṁha and had been his playmate in childhood while Kīrtisiṁha ruled. From the intimate note of numerous songs in which Vidyāpati has freely referred to Śivasiṁha's love, it is clear that the poet could take considerable liberties with him. While Vidyāpati remained attached to eight or nine successive courts, beginning from Kīrtisiṁha's to that of Bhairavasiṁha, the period of his stay with Śivasiṁha was the hey-day of his poetic career. It was then that he felt the deepest emotions and gave them the most artistic expression. Today, we cannot but marvel at the sweep of his imagination, which ranged from normal human love, to love which transcends the individual plane and melts into impersonal ecstasies on the universal plane. All his rich experience, his power of observation and sense of beauty went to make and mould his poetry. Vidyāpati's poetry ministers at first to sensuousness, but step by step it rises to a plane which goes beyond all material limitations.

Really Vidyāpati's Bhavollas Padas are glories of world literature:

Hamar mandir jab āob kān
Dīṭi bhari herab se chāṅd bayān
Nahi nahi bolab jab ham nāri
Adhīk pīrīti tab karab Murārī.

(When to my temple Kṛishṇa, shall repair, I will look at his moon-like face with full eyes. When as his beloved I shall say 'no, no', Murārī will love me all the more.)

The meeting which comes after separation brings satisfaction more intensive than ever before:

Ājū rajanī ham bhāge gamāol
Pekhal piyāmukh chandā
Jiban youban safal kari mānal
Daś diś bhel nirdandā.

(The night to-day I have passed happily as I saw the moon-like face of my lover. My life and youth are all being led to fruition as the ten directions appear free and clear.)

Very soon love rises to a height which knows no satiety and has a glory all its own:

Kat madhū yāmīnī rabhas gamāol
Na bujhal kaisan kelī
Lākh lākh yug hīyā-hīye rākhal
To hiyā juḍal na geli.

(Numerous spring nights I have passed in revelry and yet I have not understood what is love-sport. Lacs upon lacs of years I have entertained him in my heart and yet the heart has remained unsatisfied.)

In the end the beloved bears the same relation to the lover as the waves bear to the ocean:

Kat chaturānan marī marī āot
Na tua ādī abasānā
Tohi janam punī tohi samāot
Sāgar lahari samānā.

(While many a Brāhma will appear and pass away, you do not know any beginning or end; he will take his birth in you and shall merge in you in the manner of the waves in the ocean.)

While we enjoy the exquisite beauty of Vidyāpati's poetry, we realize the mediocrity of his contemporaries who tried their hand at Maithili. Chandrakalā (who was Vidyāpati's daughter-in-law), Jivanātha, Amṛitakara, Bhānukavi, Gajasiṁha, and Rudradhara were some of the literary figures who wrote in Maithili, either contemporaneously with Vidyāpati or after him till about 1526. Their writings bear a clear impress of Vidyāpati's genius and are impressive in their own way but are pale when compared with those of the master.

As a matter of fact, in thoughts, in imagery, and in the forms of expression these poets are so much indebted to Vidyāpati that we do not come across any original figure till we reach the time of Govindadāsa, at the beginning of the 17th century.

Hindi Language and Literature

During the period under review two of the outstanding authors, Jyotirīśwar and Vidyāpati whose writings are undoubtedly linked with Hindi almost in the same way as with Maithili, flourished in Mithilā, Bihar. We need not give any detailed account of their works here as they have already been dealt with under Maithili. Still it is worth while mentioning that Avahatta, in which Jyotirīśwar wrote his *Varṇa-Ratnākara* and Vidyāpati his *Kīrtilatā* and *Kīrtipatākā*, was a later development of Apabhraṁśa, having on the one hand elements of old Maithili, and on the other, of western Śauraseni forms. It is basically the same Avahatta which is used in *Prākṛit-Painglam*, containing instances of verses ranging from the 11th to the 14th century A.D., and in Abdur Rahmān's *Sanderasak* (13th century). We may quote the following lines of Vidyāpati from his stray verses in Avahatta to indicate the intermingling of predominantly Hindi forms with Maithili forms:—

Ek disi jaban sakal dal chālimo
Ek disi Jamraj charu;
Duhuo dalak manorath puruo garue
Dar Sibsingha karu;
Surataru kusum ghali disi poorao
Duṅduhi suṅdar sad dharu;
Veer Datta dekhan ko karan surgan soe
Gagan taru.

(On one side the whole army of the Yavanas was marching and on the other Jayaraja was advancing. The desires of both the sides were fulfilled. Shiva Singh took great pride in this. He gathered the flowers of the celestial tree and scattered them in all directions. The drums were producing charming sounds, and the assemblage of the deities crowded gracefully into the sky in order to witness the royal umbrella of that warrior.

Jyotirīśwar's prose work, *Varṇa-Ratnākara*, likewise contains along with its Maithili forms several usages which are common to Hindi. As a matter of fact, the Avahatta in which these authors wrote, while maintaining the identity of its basic structure, freely partook of the forms of the various spoken dialects of the particular localities to which the writers belonged. It was in this sense not the property of a particular region but the common source of the early phase in the development of the various regional languages like Rajasthani, Gujerati, Maithili and the Hindi dialects. While extending the

sphere of its use towards the eastern regions in Bengal, Assam (compare Śaṅkardev, 14th century) and even in Orissa (compare Ramanand Roy, 15th century), it assumed the name of Brajabuli which was definitely leaning towards western Hindi. The relationship of the identity between Avahatta and Brajabuli may clearly be seen in the *Kīrtilatā*. Even before the *Kīrtilatā* we have an evidence of the use of Brajabuli in Bihar in the work of the famous poet Umāpati (14th century) entitled *Pārijāt-Maṅgal*, a poetic drama, in which the songs have been definitely written in Brajabuli containing Hindi and Maithili forms simultaneously.

In fact, the very style of these works, both in prose and poetry, which is replete with tatsam words set in a highly ornate design, points to a well-developed and considerably standardized literary language, which was commonly used in the whole of the area between Gujerat in the west and Assam in the east, and served the cultural and literary need of this extensive region. The *Uktivyaktiprakāraṇa* of Dāmodar Śarmā (12th century), in which Bhojpuri, which is one of the major dialects of Bihar, has been used, also exhibits the same tatsam tendency. In the western Śauraseni area we have the testimony of *Kuvalayamala-kathā* (9th century) and *Daśarnabhadra Kathā* of Tarunaprabhasuri (14th century) in both of which there is an increasing use of tatsam words in place of the tadbhāv and deśī words.

It will be of interest to note in this connexion that the *Padāvali* of Vidyāpati is acclaimed by such eminent scholars as Ram Chandra Shukla, Shyam Sundar Das and others as one of the standard classical works in Hindi deserving of special attention. It has been significantly urged that notwithstanding the differences in some of the grammatical categories like the conjugational forms and others, the vocabulary of Maithili is as predominantly common with Hindi as that of Brajabhāshā, Kannji, Avadhi and so on, and therefore Hindi literature has the same claim on Vidyāpati's *Padāvali* as on *Bisaldeva Raso* (Hindi Sahityaka Itihas, p. 57, by Shukla.)

One would also like to point to an important phase in the development of the language as evidenced in these Avahatta works of Bihar. The impact of the Muslim culture began to be imprinted on the language of this period in the form of the use of quite a number of Arabic and Persian words. Both *Varṇa-Ratnākara* and *Kīrtilatā* have such loan words as tuluk (Turk) 'the Turks'; Eir (arrow); pyaju (onion); ohda (post or position); mouja (village); adap, adab

(respect); deman, diwan (Diwan or Minister); balha, bali (master or ruler); tabela, astabal, (stable); dar sadar, sadar darwaza (main gate), etc.

The contribution of Sūfī preachers of Bihar to the evolution of a common mixed language, Khariboli or Hindustani is worth noting. We get genuine specimens and authentic evidences of linguistic assimilation in the writings and utterances of the Sūfī saints recorded by their immediate disciples. Not to speak of Hindustani terms such as khāt (bedstead), bhāt (boiled rice), khichri (pulse and rice boiled together), dola (a kind of sedan), khirki (window), chārpāyee (four-legged bedstead), langoti (a narrow slip to cover the private parts), and numerous Indian names such as Chajju Gawai, Bibi Pujārī, Bhikan Piyārā, Lad Safi, Jojan, Sheikh Chulhai, Maulānā Nathan, Shaikh Badh Nur, we get full sentences spontaneously spoken, and Hindi dohāras quoted or composed by early Muslim saints of Bihar.

This should, however, never be interpreted as the influence of the sudden conquest of Bihar by Muhammad-bin-Bakhtīyār Khaljī (1198). As a matter of fact, within a century of their invasion the Muslims had Indianized themselves by developing an Indian outlook. The emergence of a Hindi poet such as Amīr Khusru (1255) among them is a good illustration of this fact. If even a small fraction of what passes as his work be genuine, it is enough to show that the attitude underlying his writings was predominantly Indian in character.

In Bihar this process of cultural and linguistic fusion was set in motion mainly by the Sūfī saints who moved from the western parts to these regions where they preached to the people. When they came to Bihar they began mixing the local idiom in their use of Hindi both in speech and writing. The mingling of Turkish, Arabic and Persian words in their vocabulary was a natural phenomenon arising out of their cultural background. This trend in the development of Hindi through linguistic blendings and cohesion is to be seen in the works of the Sūfī saints of Bihar, written in Persian in the form of letters (Malfuzat) and discourses and utterances (Maktubat) in which Hindi verses and sayings and illustrative statements in prose have also been quoted. It is noteworthy that words of foreign origin seem deliberately to have been avoided in the verses. A brief reference to some of the remarkable instances of Hindi contained in them will be found interesting.

The distinguished Sūfī saint of Bihar (Ambair), Hazrat Ahmad

Chiramposh or 'the hide-wearer' (14th century) who was the first cousin of Hazrat Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad, wrote several verses of a high order which embody his mystic experiences, wide sympathy, broad-mindedness and cosmopolitan tolerance. A work entitled *Ẓia-ul-Qulub*, compiled by his disciple, Shaikh Alā-ud-dīn Ali-bin-Ibrāhīm, also contains a Hindi dohāra by the saint.

Maadan-ul-Maani, the earliest Malfuzat of the 14th century Bihari saint, the celebrated Hazrat Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad Maneri, refers to the following incident in the course of an account of a gathering. One Maulānā Zalāl-ud-dīn Multāni, had remarked that a Hindu poet had put the particular point under discussion very neatly. When asked about it, he quoted as follows:—

Bāt bhali par sankri

(A path is good, but only when it is narrow!)

To this the saint replied without waiting for the other line:—

Deś bhalā par dūr.

'A country is good, but only when it is far off.'

This shows the wide prevalence and popularity of Hindi in its well-developed form all the way from Multan in the west to Bihar in the east.

Rahat-ul-Arwah, a Mulfuz of Hazrat Khwāja Azizullah of which the MS. is dated A.D. 1673, contains the following Hindi lines of Baba Farid Sakarganj of Pak Pattan (13th century) which were quoted by the 14th century Bihari saint, Hazrat Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad Maneri in one of his letters:

Kalha labdi babli bandi kare na lajj
Joha khoe na piye nirgun sabhi ehhajj;

(The quarrelsome, the garrulous, the madcaps and the captives are shameless. Much as they may search for that Qualityless Being Who pervades everything, having missed Him, they will not find Him again.)

Hazrat Maulānā Muzaffar Sams Bulkhi (Makdum-e-Bihar, A.D. 1400), the celebrated disciple and follower of Hazrat Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad Maneri, gives the account in his collection of letters (121st letter addressed to Maulānā Karm-ud-dīn) of a player on the bow-string who came to the saint Hazrat Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad and, playing

on his simple musical instrument (Kamacha), sang the following Hindi dohāra:—

Ekat kandi bedhana bhutar bhar ke kain;
Chita heen ichha maran titahi nahin.

(There is one small reed which pierces the body of the entire universe and leads to a state of death at will without cremation on the pyre. One can also take [funeral] ablutions in the same state.)

The mystic ideal represented here proved so very touching to the saint that he was deeply moved and began shedding tears.

This indicates how Hindi dohāras were readily understood and imbibed by Muslim saints.

Quite a number of books and sayings are ascribed to Hazrat Muzaffar Shams Bulkhi among which mention may be made of his Hindi Chutkule, Nuskhe (Prescriptions), Falnam (Augury), and Tabir khwab (Interpretation of Dreams). The following dohāra of his has been quoted also by Shah Manauar, the son of Shah Daulat Maneri, who was a contemporary of Akbar and Jahāngīr and whose magnificent mausoleum still stands in Manersharif:—

Kala haṅsa nirmala basai samudar tir,
Pankh pasarai bikh harai nirmal karai sarir
Dard rahai na pir.

(The perfectly stainless and resplendent black goose lives on the shore of the ocean. It spreads out its wings, takes away the poison and purifies the body so that neither the [inner] pangs nor the [physical] sufferings remain.)

An instance of the everyday use of Hindi in conversation is furnished in the book entitled *Māadan-ul-asrar* of Hazrat Qazin Suttar who lies entombed in the Bania-Basarh of Muzaffarpur district (1385). He ascribes the following Hindi sentence to the 14th century saint Makhdum Jalāl-ud-dīn Bukhari of Uch, who was regarded by Fīrūz Shah Tughluq as his preceptor :—

Khanda hai phanda kahan?

(The ditch is there, where is the net?)

Bhikha Shah Sailani of Darbhanga (15th century) uses a sentence

in Hindi which expressly refers to bhāsā purbi 'the eastern language'. This is the exact expression used by Kabir for his own language:

Meri bhāshā purvi mujhko lakha na koe
Mujhko to soi lakhai jo purab ka hoe to.

(My language is of the eastern region [or the primordial past]. Nobody can perceive me. Only he can perceive me, who belongs to the east [or the primordial past].)

The 15th century saint Syed Muhammad of Amjhar, in the Aurangabad sub-division of Gaya district, also used Hindi when talking to the people of the locality. In a book called *Manaquih-e-Mohammadi* a contemporary biographer of his has quoted a Hindi sentence which he addressed by way of reply to a leader of the Gwalas, who had become his convert and devotee, when the latter asked him why, after the days of privation were over and various buildings and khanqah (convents) had been erected for him by the order of Daryā Khan Nuhāni, the then governor of Bihar, he was asking his followers to leave the place and go to the jungle. The sentence runs as follows:

Na mana jaio, ihan na rahna.

(He paid no heed but said, you must go. Do not stay here.)

In this instance, *mana, rahna* and *jaio* are illustrations of Khariboli as spoken in Delhi and other western Hindi areas, while *ihan* is a typically Bihari form. This reflection of Hindi in the local patterns of popular speech-forms and vice versa is indicative of the linguistic coalescence that was imperceptibly taking place by means of the mutual intercourse between the Muslim saints and the population of Bihar. Hindi was thus rapidly gaining extension through the influence of these Muslim fakirs. This natural *rapprochement* between Hindi and the regional languages as evidenced here, has been a powerful factor in its development through the centuries.

Persian Language and Literature

Tabaqāt-i-Nasirī (Elliot's translation, p. 309) says that Muhammad Bakhtīyār Khaljī, after conquering Bihar in 1199, built mosques and colleges everywhere. His 'Amīrs' and officers imitated his example. Through the masjids, khanqahs and madrasas the rulers tried to propagate their learning and language amongst the people. Some time after, Persian was introduced in Bihar and it became the

language of administration. The rulers, for their administrative convenience, no doubt, learnt the language of the people, but they tried their best to promote Arabic and Persian. In spite of these great efforts, however, there is little evidence to show that the people in general showed any inclination to learn Persian. For some centuries the Hindus followed their own independent course.

Persian literature in this province was first produced by saints and Sūfīs who were themselves learned men. They wrote both prose and poetry with elegance. They never cared for the king's patronage and cultivated literature for the sake of literature and also as a means of shaping the religious outlook of the people. The literature of this period deserves our consideration. We find in it the message of love and peace expounded by men of character. The chief literary centres were Maner and Biharsharif, while other centres were Barh, Rajgir, Amjhar and Hajipur. The Sūfī saints, by their writings, discourses and verses, have served Bihar well and deserve to be remembered.

SHARF-UD-DĪN AHMAD

The first important writer and saint was Shaikh Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad, born in Maner, a village in Patna district. His father Yahiya was a renowned Sūfī and his mother Razia was a saintly lady. In fact, all the holy orders of the saints in Bihar trace their descent, lineal or spiritual, to them. Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad completed his education at Sonargāon in Bengal. He acquired a perfect knowledge of all branches of Muslim theology, sciences, poetry, rhetoric and philosophy. He then went to Delhi in quest of saints and men of learning, but no one there impressed him. He is said to have remarked, 'If this is learning, I am also a learned man.' At Delhi however, he became a disciple of Najīb-ud-dīn Firdausi. He returned to his native place after spending several years in devotion in the hills of Behea (Shahabad district) and Rajgir. He died in great sanctity in Bihar in 1380 and his tomb became a place of pilgrimage. He preached tolerance and that 'the path of Islām is wide enough.'

Without doubt, he is one of the best Persian prose writers of his period. His style is simple and direct and we find in it a combination of dignity and grace. He has left a large number of works, sixteen of which are available.

Abul Fazal, the great writer of Persian letters, very much liked the saint's Maktubat (letters) and mentions them in his *Āin-i-Akbari.*

AHMAD CHIRAMPOSH

Ahmad Chiramposh of Ambair was the first cousin of the Saint of Maner. He was a mystic, philosopher and poet. His dress consisted of a cap of hide and garments made of sackcloth and he was therefore known as Chiramposh. He belonged to the Suharwardi school of mystics. Like all Sūfīs of Bihar, he recognized truth in every faith and emphasized the need of love. To him, 'Islām' and 'Kufr' all became one through love. He died most probably in 1364. Ahmad Chiramposh's contribution to Persian consists in his mystic utterances as compiled by his disciples, and in his *Diwān* (poetical works).

The following is typical of his style:—

صد هزاران آئینه شاهد یکی　　نیست کس را اندرین معنی شکی

گر یکی بینی یکی بینی همه　　زانکه اندر یک نباشد جز یکی

وحدت اندر کثرت او آشکار　　برکشا از راه بینش چشم کن

گر همی خواهی که بینی دوست را　　بر جمال خود نظر کن اندکی

گشت ثم الفقر احمد را تمام　　فخر دارد از پلاس و چرمکی

1. There are a hundred thousand mirrors but the Beholder is one; about this nobody can have the least doubt.
2. If you can see the One Being you will see oneness in all; because in One there is nothing but One.
3. Unity is manifest in plurality; open your mortal eyes and see it.
4. If you desire to see the Friend, cast a glance on your own beauty for a while.
5. In Ahmad poverty has reached its perfection; he glories in his sackcloth and leather cap.

MUZAFFAR SHAMS BALKHI

This poet was born in Balkh. He had completed his education before coming to Bihar and was noted for his learning. He became a disciple of Shaikh Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad. During his two years' stay in Delhi, he was employed as a teacher in the famous Madrasa-i-Fīrūz

Shahi. He died in 1386. Muzaffar was a writer noted for both his poetry and prose. His works consist of letters and poems. His *Diwān* contains chiefly ghazals and muqattaat. Nearly all his poems are mystical, philosophical and ethical in character. The following may serve as a fairly good specimen:—

عاشقان جان باختن آموختند   جان و دل را ساختن آموختند

خویش را با خانمان هر دو کون   درمیان انداختن آموختند

رخش راندند از دو عالم بیشتر   پس دو عالم تاختن آموختند

سوختم چون دفتر دیوان عقل   عشق را پرداختن آموختند

1. The lovers taught how to play with life and taught the heart to reconcile itself to life.
2. They taught men how to stake at one throw all this life as well as the life to come.
3. They galloped their steeds out and beyond the two worlds and taught how to overrun the present and the future.
4. When I set fire to the bundle of the Book of Reason, lovers learnt the perfection of love.

Muzaffar Balkhi's verses are full of the verities of that true unitarianism which is the fifth degree of perfection in a Sūfī's life where the divine essence is contemplated as void of any attribute conceived by thought. He sometimes also beholds the infinite manifestation of Divine Beauty in the beautiful objects of the phenomenal world.

HUSAIN 'NAUSHĀH-I-TAUHID'

Husain was born at Zafarabad in Jaunpur. His education was completed under Shaikh Sharf-ud-dīn as is evident from the final verse of his *Mathnawi:*

بود شرف الدین یحیی جان من .   جان چه باشد جان جان جانان من

(Sharf-ud-dīn was my life. Why only my life? He was the soul of my life and my most beloved.)

Husain was popularly known as 'Naushāh-i-Tauhid' نوشہ توحید (the young prince of unitarianism). Like other Sūfīs, Husain was fond of listening to devotional music which he regarded as a purifying agent for the soul. He died in 1440 and has left eight works, including letters and poems.

Husain composed a treatise in Arabic on the mystical topic of "وحدت وجود" (the Unity of Existence) and named it *Hazrat Khams*. This work was translated into Persian by his son Hasan, under the title, *Kashif-ul-Asrar*, and was lithographed at Patna in 1896.

AHMAD 'LANGAR-I-DARYĀ'

Ahmad says that he was born on the 27th Ramzan A.H. 826, A.D. 1423. Probably on account of his strength of character and devoutness as a Sūfī he was commonly known as 'Langar-i-Daryā'. He was a strong-minded, purposeful man, who was gifted with an extraordinary intellect. He died in 1486.

The spiritual teachers who guided Ahmad on the mystic path had taught him to hate ostentation and to study his own defects. Ahmad says:—

ترا یک ذره در خود عیب دیدن
به از صد نوع غیب الغیب دیدن

(For you it is better to perceive one of your smallest defects than to try to see the Invisible in a hundred ways.)

Ahmad is known chiefly for his work *Munis-ul-Qulub* (a collection of his sayings and utterances). This work is in the same style as the 'maktubat' and 'malfuzat' of other Sūfī writers of the period. Incidentally it provides information of some considerable value by giving an account of certain Sūfī ideas which were then popular. Ahmad's *Diwān* consists of lyrical poetry of general and mystical types.

Before concluding this résumé it is necessary to say something about a few more writers and their contributions to the literature of this period:

(1) Shaikh Hasan was a man of learning and a known Sūfī of his time. He is said to have died in 1451. He wrote a commentary on *Hazrat-i-Khams* in Persian and named it *Kashif-ul-Asrar*.

(2) Shaikh Abdul Faiz Qazin bin Ola bin Ālam was most probably born in the last decade of the 8th century A.D. He is the author of *Madan-ul-Asrar*. This work deals with the principles and practices of a particular sect of Sūfīs.

(3) Shah Shuaib, a grandson of Abdul Aziz, was the author of *Manaqib-ul-Asfia*.

(4) Ibrāhīm Qiwam Faruqi, who lived in the city of Bihar, was the author of *Sharaf-Nāmāh*, a Persian dictionary. There is a manuscript of this work in the British Museum.

(5) Shaikh Hasan Tahi was born in Bihar, though his family hailed from Multan. He went to Delhi during the time of Sultan Sikander Lodī. He died in 1503 and has left a work entitled *Miftahul-Faiz*.

Urdu Language and Literature

Urdu is a confluence of cultures and languages, mainly Asian; but in latter-day Urdu, European influence is also obviously there.

Urdu can be called an Aryan language because of its basic structure, vocabulary and grammar; but its Dravidian contribution cannot be denied as all the Indian Prākṛits (local languages) were deeply influenced by older Dravidian linguisitc traditions. When the Apabhraṁśa period approached, Dravidian influences were absorbed.

One of the western Apabhraṁśas which had evolved from Śauraseni Prākṛit is the mother of Urdu. Gradually the name of 'Khariboli' came to be attached to the linguistic base of Urdu and Hindi, the twin modern northern languages.

Cultural waves and influences have more often come from Western Asia to India than from the East. In the genesis of the Urdu language, Perso-Arabic influences played an important role in pre-Islamic as well as the Islamic periods of history. The evolution of Urdu has been a very complex process, but its basic and standard form evolved by a synthesis of 'Khariboli' and Perso-Arabic words and word-combinations. The synthesis was called Rekhta, and the Khariboli, i.e. the Perso-Arabic Rekhta, gradually developed and was nourished in the city of Delhi by the palace, poets and people. The homeland of Urdu and Hindi, however, is the native country of Khariboli in the south-eastern Punjab and western Uttar Pradesh.

URDU IN BIHAR

The infiltration and spread of Khariboli into the Deccan, Gujerat, Punjab, Oudh, Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Assam took place through its Urdu form from the time of Qutub-ud-dīn Aibak (early 13th century) to the period of Shah Alam II (early 19th century).

The individuality of Urdu lies in its tendency to use more Tadbhāva words (modified Sanskrit words) and more words of Perso-Arabic origin than Hindi, the other form of Khariboli. Urdu settled in Bihar as naturally as anywhere in the famous Urdu centres and zones of India. Patna became the cultural headquarters of Urdu for Bihar. Urdu spread all over the province from the Gangetic valley to the plateau of Chotanagpur.

The precursors of Urdu in Bihar were linguistic mixtures formed with the sprinkling of Perso-Arabic words in the local languages of Bihar, namely Bhojpuri, Magadhi and Maithili, and even in aboriginal languages like Oraon, Munda and Ho of Chotanagpur. This process started with the advent of the Muslims in Bihar about A.D. 1126. The Turks came to Manersharif early in the 12th century A.D. Muhammad bin Bakhtīyār Khaljī conquered Bihar and Bengal between 1192 and 1204. The Musalmans not only brought Persian, Turkish and Arabic words with them, but they also brought in western Apabhraṁśa dialects, specially Khariboli.

There is much truth in the fact that the socio-religious factor is more responsible than political influence in the genesis and dissemination of the Urdu language and its literature. The Sūfī saints of Bihar played an important role in blending Indo-Muslim culture. They themselves learnt Indian languages and taught Arabic and Persian to the people. Ultimately, when a common language evolved the Sūfīs patronized it. These saints formed the nuclei of early Muslim settlements in India.

Bihar always remained under the direct socio-political influence of Delhi, and the development of Urdu in Bihar was on lines similar to those in Delhi. The earliest documentary evidence of the Urdu language is seen interspersed in the Persian Malfuzats of Sūfī saints in both the north-western and north-eastern zones of India. The following are examples:—

(1) Hazrat Sharf-ud-dīn Behari (661-782 A.H.). Once Hazrat Sharf exclaimed: 'Do manho tark, channoo na bhati.' (*Ganj-e-Rash-idi*) (Leave me alone, I don't like this even for a moment.) Some dohāras and kajmandras of the Saint, said to be miraculously

efficacious in curing ailments, are rich in such phrases as: 'Dard rahe na peer,' and 'Gard chhooain darbar ki so dard door ho jaay.' (*Punjab meṅ Urdu*). (Neither pain will remain nor pang. As I touch the dust of the court, the pain will vanish away.)

(2) Hazrat Muzaffar Shams Balkhi (725-788 A.H.) composed the following:—

Ji magan men hai ke ale hain sohani ratyan
Jin ke karan thay bahut din se banaee gatyan (Dardai).

(The soul is delighted as the pleasing night has come for which I was pining for a long time.)

Jeth Asadh na aian patan bhar har banh.
Ti beheri basardhin thekai jal thal nanh.

(Leaves do not grow green during summer months. Their lover, the rainy season, has forgotten them.) (Maktubat, Khudbaksh Library.)

(3) Hazrat Syed Ahmad Chiramposh (died 776 A.H.) wrote as follows:—

Meeta man namonia sheromeni kaha hoay.
Enhin bedha bedman mean sar na keni hoya.

(Friend! the soul is not intoxicated with love, how can it rise high? Nobody can conquer it unless it is pierced [with love shaft].) (*Zea-ul-qoloob*).

(4) Syed Muhammad Amjhari (died 940 A.H.) once said:

Na mana jeo inha narahna hua.

(The heart did not agree, [and] living was not possible here.) MSS.P.U.).

(5) Hazrat Abul Faiz Qazan of Benia Basarh, Hajipur-Khelafat (881 A.H.). The saint quotes another Sūfī and repeats his saying:—

Khanda hai phanda kahan.

(The ditch is here, (and) where is the net?) (*Madan-ul-Asrar*).

Many other pearls are hidden in the treasure-house of the sayings (Malfuzat) and writings (Maktubat) of the great Sūfī saints of Bihar.

D. Economic Conditions

An account of the economic conditions of Bihar during the Turco-Afghan period must needs be largely conjectural, owing to paucity of materials directly relating to this part of the country. The study has necessarily to be made against a background of the general conditions of Hindustan during the age, as supplemented by some incidental but interesting details furnished by contemporary literature, secular and religious.

Bihar then was an essentially a rural and an agricultural area. The self-complacent and non-enterprising peasant pursued the even tenor of his days. The rural economy was almost self-sufficient but stereotyped. It was perhaps seldom disturbed except in times of famine, locust-pest or invasion.

Agriculture was the mainstay of the economy of medieval Bihar. Except domestic servants and craftsmen all others were busy in cultivation. The Muslim rulers realized early their dependence on the peasants. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq was much concerned with their well-being. The peasant was regarded as the backbone of the State. But he was expected to be a good cultivator, and as Zia-ud-dīn Barani observes, a negligent peasant could be ejected. Literary sources tell us that in Mithilā agriculture was the occupation of the Vaiśyas and members of the lower classes.

Agricultural Production

The land supplied food and fodder alike. Rice, pulses, barley, millets, peas, oilseeds, sugar-cane, and cotton were among the chief crops. Onions, garlic, poppy seeds and spices like mauri (aniseed), methi (fenugreek) and mongrela were also grown, as we learn from *Varṇa-Ratnākara*. It also mentions chura (flattened rice) and farhi (fried rice). Suitable arrangements were made for stocking grain. Among fruits may be mentioned the mango, date, plantain, melon, pomegranate, orange, fig, lemon, khrinee, jamun, jack-fruit and many others. The use and distribution of kharbuza (melon) by the famous 14th century Saint of Bihar is referred to in a contemporary religious tract (*Ganj-i-lā-yafnā*, 1358-59). Banana trees were grown in almost every garden in Mithilā.

Sugar, spirits, sweet oil, perfumed oils and scents were among the principal manufactures based on agricultural produce. Sugar, both refined and unrefined, was one of the principal articles of food. It was an important article of export to various countries, and the sugar

trade was immensely profitable. Honey was collected, and used in the temples in Bihar and Nepal.

Spirits were manufactured from unrefined sugar, mahua, barley cakes, rice and date-palm. The observations of Barbosa, the Portuguese traveller, and of Mahuan, the Muslim secretary of the Chinese naval mission (1405) regarding Bengal would be equally applicable to Bihar. The former says that wines of different kinds were prepared, mostly out of palm sugar, and drunk on festive occasions. The latter notes that spirits were openly sold in the market.

The betel-leaf industry was highly developed. Alberuni found pan-chewing to be a national habit. Its preparation (tambool) had grown into a fine art, as described in the *Varṇa-Ratnākara*. Different kinds of lime and spices were used and it required ingredients imported from different parts of India and abroad. Silver-leafed pan was also in use.

TEXTILES

The manufacture of textiles (cotton, silk and woollen cloth) was one of the biggest industries of Hindustan in those days. Cotton was widely cultivated in Bihar and Bengal, as in other areas of Hindustan. Wool came not only from domesticated sheep but also from mountainous tracts. Silk was reared in Bengal and perhaps brought to Bihar for manufacture. Spinning and weaving of cotton were the most important of the home industries. The finished cloth was sold by the piece or by weight, either for cash or by barter.

A large variety of cloth was manufactured in those days in Eastern India, especially in Bengal and Bihar. Mithilā was an important market, if not a centre of cloth production. The *Varṇa-Ratnākara* refers by name to about thirty varieties of cloth but details of these varieties are lacking. Towels also were made of costly cloth. There were different varieties of tents and curtains, including those proof-against mosquitoes (mashari) and for the use of the army. Dyeing and calico printing went hand in hand with manufacture of cloth.

METAL-WORK

This has been a very old industry in India, maintained by a love for ornaments, by the need for agricultural and domestic implements, epigraphs and coins, and by military requirements. All these factors were present in Bihar. The *Kīrtilatā* and *Varṇa-Ratnākara* contain numerous references to articles of different metals and to different

sections of markets assigned to dealers in gold, silver, copper, bell-metal and asht-dhãt, (an alloy of eight metals), jugs, cups, jars, plates, basins, cooking and other vessels, bells, idols, lamp-stands, betel-leaf boxes and many other things. The art of smelting iron ore was known to the blacksmiths of Bihar, who manufactured various agricultural implements, guns, knives and scissors of iron. No wonder that Abul Fazal states that Indians knew how to handle metals like iron, brass, silver, zinc, metal alloys (asht-dhãt) as well as mica.

STONE AND BRICKWORK

Masonry in stone and brick developed in Bihar as a result of the need for the construction of temples, mosques and other buildings, public and private. Masons were patronized both by Hindu chiefs and Muslim rulers. The khaprail (earthen tile) industry was also developed.

WOODWORK

There are several references to woodwork in contemporary literature, secular and religious. The need for household furniture and for means of conveyance fed the industry. The carpenters of the villages and towns in Bihar prepared doors, pegs, seats, toys, bedsteads, chãrpai, takht and other articles of wood. *Varṇa-Ratnā-kara* refers to thrones of wood and sandalwood stools and gives an elaborate account of the bedsteads. The palanquin was a common means of conveyance.

The construction of boats was an important industry of the times. In his account of Bihar (*c.* 1234-36) Dharmaswāmī mentions that boats carrying passengers across the Ganges were big enough to accommodate 300 persons. Twenty-nine varieties of boats have been described in the *Varṇa-Ratnākara*. Some were 20, 22, 25, or 28 cubits long. Some had the head of a lion, tiger, horse, duck, snake or fish as figurehead. Some were towed by only one man. Some were elaborately decorated with flags and chāmars with masts and doors. Some were manned by soldiers and footmen armed with bows and arrows and swords. From a religious tract of the 14th century (*Ganj-i-lā-yafnā*, 1358-59) it is clear that boats with turreted platforms were also built and adequately decorated.

DAIRY INDUSTRIES

Dairy industries were sufficiently developed in Bihar. Curds,

milk and ghee were not only consumed by men but also offered as ingredients of worship. Mithilā was then, as now, famous for its milk and curd preparations. There is special reference to thick, perfectly congealed curd (chāp dahi) and curd full of ghee.

LEATHERWORK

Leatherwork was the profession of quite a large number of persons belonging to the chāmār (tanner) caste. There was a general demand for leather goods by military and semi-military personnel, by the civilian population and also by business circles. Thus saddles, bridles, scabbards of swords, covers of books, containers for parcels of sugar, water-buckets, shoes and many other articles were manufactured out of leather. Alberuni found the shoes and slippers of Hindustan terminating below the ankle, instead of covering the leg up to the calf as do boots in foreign countries. Speaking of Bengal, Barbosa writes that the people were well shod, some wearing shoes and some sandals, well-wrought and gilded. The *Kīrtilatā* refers to shoe-shops in Jaunpur.

MINOR INDUSTRIES

Besides the major industries there were some minor ones: sewing, cap-making, arms manufacture (thirty-six kinds of weapons including bows and arrows are referred to in the *Varṇa-Ratnākara*), the making of drums and musical instruments; rope, basket and fan-making and pottery.

GUILDS AND INDUSTRIAL LABOUR

Speaking of guilds in India, Alberuni (11th century), says: 'These guilds live near the village and towns of the four castes but outside them. There are eight classes (guilds) who freely intermarry with each other, except the fueller, shoe-maker, and weavers, for no others would condescend to have anything to do with them. These eight guilds are the fueller, shoemaker, juggler, the basket and shield-maker, the sailor, the fisherman, the hunter of wild animals and birds, and the weaver.' He mentions that the lowest people were the Hārhi, Doma, Chaṇḍāla and Bhadatau, performing 'dirty work like cleaning villages and other services,' constituting 'one sole class' but distinguished by their occupations.

Even after the Muslim conquest of Northern India, the old craft guilds and professional castes continued to function in industry.

There were several crafts and industries in the villages and cities of Bihar which might well be described as cottage industries. But broadly speaking the industrial workers did not differ greatly from rural craftsmen. The services of the builder and stoneworker, the tentmaker, the upholsterer and clothmaker, the metalworker and armourer were in great demand.

An idea of some of the occupations in North Bihar may be formed from the description of the town in the *Varṇa-Ratnākara*, where the author gives a list of some of the lower castes and depressed classes (maṅda jāti), viz., teli (oilmen), tāṅtī (weavers), dhānuk (archers), dhoar (washermen), dhāngar (shepherds), dhunia (cotton ginners), dhalikār (basket-makers), dom, hārhi, chaṇḍāla, chāmār (leather-workers), gond (mallāh, oarsmen and fishermen), goar (milkmen), sunḍi (wine sellers), sāo (banias). The *Varṇa-Ratnākara* also mentions shampooers (maradania) and masseurs. Guilds of leatherworkers are referred to by Amīr Khusru.

The labour employed in these industries was of a hereditary character. The implements and methods of work were crude and the out-turn meagre. But through successive generations of specialized work, a high degree of efficiency and skill was attained. The quality of the products was excellent and their artistic value great. Amīr Khusru praises the excellence of manufactures. Yet it has to be borne in mind that the social status and the limited opportunities of village craftsmen discouraged them from making progress beyond certain limits, and they were not adequately protected against administrative oppression. Further the traditions of guilds and crafts tended to create a rigid exclusiveness, while technical secrets sometimes died with the worker and were lost to posterity. Babar found the craftsmen of Hindustan organized in rigid and exclusive castes. The majority of craftsmen were Hindu while a small percentage came from lower-class Muslims, mostly Indian converts.

TRADE

The surplus manufactures of villages, as well as industrial goods, were disposed of in suitable markets. The capital city (Biharsharif) might have been the focus of internal trade and have served as the clearing-house for the whole of Bihar. Banjāras, or grain-carriers, moved with their bullocks, carts and pack-horses and were the main means of transport. There were annual or periodical fairs, including cattle-fairs. Communications were carried on along the rivers and

there were also a number of military roads. The highway from Delhi to Lakhnauti (Bengal) passed through the Bhagalpur district. The route from Vārānasi passed through the Shahabad district, Patna, Monghyr and Bhagalpur.

Bihar had considerable inter-provincial trade with neighbouring provinces and different parts of India: Nepal, Bhutan, Bengal (Lakhnauti), Kamrup, Sylhet, Kaliṅga (Orissa), Jaunpur, Delhi, Sind, Gujerat, Telingana, South India and Ceylon. Bihar also maintained trade relations with the Malayan islands and perhaps also with China among the Far East and Pacific countries. She very likely maintained overland contact with Central Asia, Afghanistan and Persia along the existing routes through Multan, the Khyber Pass and Kashmir. We learn from the *Varṇa-Ratnākara*, that Mithilā (North Bihar) imported cloth from Tanjore, Sylhet, Ajmer, Kāñchī, the Chola country, Kamrup, Bengal, Gujerat, Kathiawar, Telingana, and Sidhaut. According to this work, the ideal merchant should be familiar with different peoples belonging to distant places like Srikhanda, Malaya, and Surat, and know the relative qualities of different varieties of camphor, of agaru, of spices; he should be an expert assayer of weights and prices of minerals like sulphur, nitre, diamonds and other jewels, gold, silver, copper, bell-metal, zinc, brass and stone, and of pearls, cloths and silks; he should be conscientious, generous, religious-minded and of robust health; he should also be an adept in the commercial art, eloquent, able to inspire confidence in others and give satisfaction to his customers.

Horses constituted a principal article of import because of the cavalry arm. In Jaunpur, Vidyāpati found the choicest and richly accoutred Teji (i.e. Arabian and Persian) horses for which even 'mountains of gold would be insufficient.' There were different varieties of fine, fast-moving horses. Horses came also from Bhutan. Daryā Khan Nuhāni sent his men to purchase horses at Sasaram.

As in many other countries of the period, there was a slave-trade in Bihar. Dealing in this human merchandise was a recognized means of making money. Speaking of Bengal, Barbosa writes: 'The Moors travelled up country to buy heathen boys, who were castrated, brought up, trained and sold. These eunuchs were employed as guardians of female apartments, the estates and sundry other purposes.' A slave boy was purchased for only a few rupees (as we know from the 14th-century religious tract, the *Munis-ul-Muridin*,

c. 1373-74). In Jaunpur there was a market for the sale of slaves, male and female.

An idea of the prevailing standard of commercial morality of the medieval merchant in Bihar may be formed from the following:—Big business was usually done with the help of an organized class of brokers, agents, bankers, money-lenders and sahus (merchants). Attempts to earn money by dishonest means such as adulteration and giving false weight were not infrequent. The *Munis-ul-Muridin* observes that the shopkeepers were not guides but highwaymen (exploiters), while Vidyāpati writes that 'the cunning were like the banias.' Usury was a profitable business.

COINAGE

Even after Turkish conquest, the older currency of mixed metal was continued with some modifications, including the sovereign's name in Devanagri characters. The reign of Iltutmish marked the beginning of a new monetary system with the introduction of silver coinage (tankāh), the ancestor of the modern rupee. But the currency was tri-metallic.

1 gold tankāh	=	10 silver tankāhs
1 silver tankāh (or 2 half-tankāhs)	=	48 jital (mixed metal) under the Mamluks; 64 jital under Muhammad Tughlaq
1 jital	=	4 copper adl or falus

Muhammad Tughluq's currency innovations did not prove permanent. But his gold dinars had their edges defined to prevent filing, while his silver tankāh was equated with 64 jitals. The Deccan plunder caused a glut of gold and the ratio of gold to silver was 8 : 1. Fīrūz Tughluq revised the general scheme of the prevailing currency. The copper bahluli (of Bahlul Lodī) was valued at 1/40th of the rupee while the Sikandari tankāh (of Sikandar Lodī) was valued at 1/20th of the silver tankāh. Bhagalpur and Tughluqpur-urf-Tirhut were two mint-towns in Bihar during this period.

STANDARDS OF LIVING

The standard of economic life in the village was not very high. The peasant worked hard, but his lot was not very happy. His possessions were limited to a couple of bedsteads and a scanty supply of cooking vessels. The contemporary court poet Amīr Khusru (13th-14th century) says, 'Every pearl in the royal crown is but the

crystallized drop of blood fallen from the tearful eyes of the poor peasant.' A twentieth century socialist could not have been more eloquent.

Materials are scanty regarding prices prevailing in Bihar. These must have depended upon local conditions. However, Shams-i-Sirāj Arif, the author of *Tarikh-i-Fīrūz-Shāhi*, refers to the cheapness of articles under Fīrūz throughout his dominions. Ibn Batutah, the Moorish traveller in the time of Md. Tughluq, travelling from Delhi to Bengal, refers to very cheap prices:

1 chicken	=	1 jital
15 pigeons	=	8 jitals
1 ram	=	16 jitals
Excellent cloth 30 cubits long	=	2 tankāhs
Rice	=	8 jitals a md.
A goat	=	3 tankāhs
Sugar	=	32 jitals a md.
Refined sugar	=	1 tankāh a md.
Unrefined sugar	=	16 jitals a md
A slave	=	8 tankāhs

On a very rough estimate a family consisting of man and wife, two children and a servant could live on five tankāhs a month.

Prices, however, soared high in wartime, as noted in the *Kīrtilatā* where it is stated (perhaps with considerable exaggeration) that a pan (betel leaf) cost a gold tankāh and the price of firewood rose as high as that of sandalwood.

The rich wore silks, fine muslins, fine linen, brocade, satin and a variety of furs. Silken mufflers were used by Ahmad Sharf-ud-dīn Maneri's teacher. In the *Varṇa-Ratnākara* there is an elaborate account of the hero's bedstead, which was 8 cubits long, 2½ cubits wide, decorated with ivory and crystal stands, ornamented head, and covered with four rugs and five coverlets. The 13th century Tibetan scholar Dharmaswāmī (*c.* 1234) states that beds and curtains were used by the chief abbot of Nālandā. The poorer classes wore the products of their own looms and used stuffed cotton quilts and rough blankets during the winter. Saints sometimes wore patched clothes (muraqqa).

E. The Fine Arts

The advent of the Muslims did not destroy the spirit of India and it would be unhistorical to hold that the Muslim conquest was

synchronous with, or mainly responsible for, the decadence of Hindu civilization and culture. The early Muslim period either in Bihar or elsewhere was not devoid of intellectual or artistic activities. In spite of all the political changes, the life-current of the medieval people continued to flow as before and not only the cultivators, traders and labourers but also the artists and craftsmen went on with their avocations. This is evident from contemporary literature about various arts and music.

MUSIC AND DANCE

The Maithils, who made notable contributions in several spheres of social and cultural life during this period, had valued and cultivated music from very early times, but the regular history of Mithilā music dates from the eleventh century, which witnessed the establishment of the Karṇāṭa dynasty of Simrāon by Nānyadeva (1097-1133). Nānyadeva was not only a patron of music but was also the author of a standard work on this art. He is credited with 'having developed the popular Rāgas on regular lines' in his book, the manuscript of which is still preserved in the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute of Poona.

Of the two classes of music, Margi and Desi, the former is considered as classical music and it received a great impetus during the period. The great modern exponent of classical music, Bhatkhande, has divided music experts into three categories: Kalāwant, Bagguaikar and Pandit. The first of these has been mentioned as Vidyāwant by the 14th century Mithilā scholar, Jyotirīśwar Thākur, who was himself an expert musician at the court of the last king of the Karṇāṭa dynasty, Harisiṁha Deva. Dr S. K. Chatterjee, the editor of *Varṇa-Ratnākara* says, 'the Vidyāwanta, a professional singer and music master, a person who is commonly known as Kalāwanta or Kalāwat at the present day, is described and his status and training are said to be scarcely inferior to that of the more exalted Bhāta. In this connexion the name of Rāgas of the Srutis as well as the seven kinds of Gāyan Dosh (defects in singing) and the fourteen kinds of Geet Dosh (defects of songs) are mentioned.' Many of the Rāgas mentioned in the book, such as Kauśik, Bhairavi, Hindol, Rām Kali, Śrī, Gurjari, Dhanchi, Malār, Desakhi, Deepak, Basant, Kāmod, Gaud, Karnāt, Bengālā, Mansai, Mulki, Barāti, Toki, Pat Manjari, Khenbhavati, Gāndhāra, Pancham, Nṛitti and so on, are prevalent even today. Lochan, the great Mithilā musician and author of

Rāgtaraṅgini of the 17th century, has made mention of the first fourteen of the above and also of Lalitā Vivhas, Ahirani, Gopi Vattal, Kodar (Kedāra), Aswara, Bhupāli and Raj Vijaya. It is significant that a 15th century Muslim poet of Hindvi (India) named Sheikh Qutban, in his rare and still unpublished love-poem, *Mṛigāvati*, refers to Bhārat Piṅgala, gives the names of some musical instruments used by the Gorakh-panthi Yogis (Kingri, Bin), and mentions all the important Rāgas and Rāginis as 36 in number:— 'Baje saj, sabad sah, thapai-chawo sapran rag alape. Au chattis bharja aha, een aik rag pach pach kaha een.' These are as follows:—(*a*) Bhairo and Madh Mālati, Sandhura, Bangala Bairatik, Gunki; (*b*) Kausik and Gauri, Deo Kaor, Todi, Khanbhavati, Kun-Kumbh; (*c*) Hindol and Desakh, Bairati, Nan Sahjagta, Avadi; (*d*) Deepak and Kamod, Pat Manjari, Panch Barangana, Kerai; (*e*) Megh and Mahesari, Sarangi, Barari, Dhaneasri, Kandhari; (*f*) Sri Rag and Hem Kali, Matar, Gujri, Bhuyun (Bhim), Bitasi, Khatoo.

Mithilā was the centre from which radiated the light of the art of music and dancing in different directions in Bihar. The editor of *Varṇa-Ratnākara* refers to the three sections of the sixth 'Kallola' which describe or enumerate the various kinds of dancing, the ten qualifications of the drum players, the twelve kinds of drum music, the tune beats (Tāl), the ten Rasas (sentiments) such as Śṛingār (love), Hāsya (humorous), Karuṇ (pathetic), Bīr (heroic) and so on. Thirty Bhāvas (acting or gesticulations) and twenty varieties of Vīṇās (lutes) and different kinds of Mṛidaṅgs (long drums, broader in the middle than at the ends). Maithil musicians usually flourished and enjoyed greater and wider popularity outside their own land. They enriched the music of Nepal and were very popular in Bengal and also in U.P. Singha Bhupal of Nepal, a writer on music, is identified with a Mithilā ruler of the 15th century. A still greater name is that of Jagadhara, the famous Maithil commentator of *Mālati Mādhava*, who flourished about 1474-75. The manuscript of his standard work *Sangīta-sarvaswa* is preserved in Nepal. Bhudhana Miśra went to Bengal as an expert in music and the Maithil musician was invited to the court of Tripura.

THE MUSLIM ATTITUDE

Music and the dance were tabooed by orthodox and puritanical Muslims, who acted according to the religious dictum, 'ar rags wal ghina haramun' (dancing and singing are forbidden). But being

liberal and broad-minded, the Sūfī saints of Bihar and elsewhere (specially those of the Chistia and Firdausia orders) had been attracted by the charms of music, Indian and foreign. The Saint of Bihar, H. Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad Maneri, was not averse to either vocal or instrumental music (mazamir). He was very fond of Soma (ecstatic songs in religious assemblies). His scholarly and spiritual disciple, H. Muzaffar Shams Balkhi, in the 121st letter of his Maktubats, refers to one incident. He tells us of a mendicant, a Hindu Yogi, with a simple one-stringed instrument, somewhat different from the 'Kingri' of the Nāth Yogi of *Mṛigāvati*. The relevant extract will bear quotation: 'Just when the Khamanchi (fiddler) began to play upon his Yaktāra and commenced singing the Hindavi Dhora (Distich), Bandagi Makhdum (the great saint) was so moved that tears began to trickle from his eyes and he fell into an ecstatic mood. That Dhora is this:— 'Ekat kandi bidha bhootar bhar ke kayenchita keen man ranjhiya or rajhia maran tatahi nahayen.' It means: 'The Great One has pierced through the earth and has pervaded it. The mind dwells in Him, bereft of all anxieties, and dives deep into Him.'

There are enough references to show the acquaintance of the early Sūfī saints of Bihar with the indigenous language and the art of Indian music. Folk songs and folk dances and religious songs of the Vaishṇavas were popular in medieval Bihar, but information about them, as well as secular and chamber music, is rather scanty. The Muslim conquest, though not wholly unfavourable to the cultivation and development of music, was definitely so in regard to the plastic and pictorial arts. Considering that paintings and sculpture, the craft of pottery and image-making, had been highly developed by Buddhists, Jainas and Brāhmaṇas, specially during the four centuries of Pāla rule, the paucity of such things under the Muslims, naturally attracts one's attention. In these arts, the Muslims were hampered by their uncompromising monotheism and they did not permit anyone to make any kind of likeness of living beings. The Turks too had the zeal of neo-converts and were more iconoclastic and rude than the Arabs. The Brāhmaṇas and Kāyasthas of Mithilā, specially their womenfolk, kept up traditional practices and ordinary domestic arts of painting earthen plates and pots and also the walls of their mud houses with figures of gods and goddesses. Such things could have no appeal to a Muslim unitarian and he felt no scruples in laying violent hands on those which he could easily reach.

MUSLIM CALLIGRAPHY

Nevertheless, a Muslim has artistic instincts as much as any other religious man. It found expression in the ornamental use of the Arabic script with its remarkably decorative character. He excelled in it far beyond others. He invented and developed arabesques, the style of decoration with inter-twined leaves of trees and scroll-work full of foliage and flowers. The calligraphic art was not the Muslims' only contribution, nor did it remain confined only to them. Among other gifts of Islām to India was paper, which was brought from China. After the Muslim conquest, paper began to be extensively used for writing manuscripts. Mithilā and Magadha did not totally and immediately give up their palm-leaves or 'bhojpatra,' but gradually they realized the worth of paper. The Muslims had already given up leather and parchment and we have paper manuscripts in Bihar as old as 12th century A.D.

Calligraphy was widely practised among Muslims and some kings like Nāsir-ud-dīn, Md. Tughluq and Aurangzeb were well known for their skill. There is no specimen in Bihar of the oldest 'Kufic' script which was in vogue only for a short time in India. It was soon discarded for the more beautiful and legible 'Naskh', a kind of Arabic character. But it is the highly stylistic ornamental calligraphy called the 'Tughra' and the beautiful 'Nastaliq' and the very fine 'Thulth' character with rosettes and other decorations, found on mural records, which deserve special notice. The earliest (July 1222) and most artistic 'Tughra' inscription in Arabic 'Naskh' is in Bari Dargah of H. Sharf-ud-dīn Ahmad Maneri. Next (8th March 1265) comes the Barahdari inscription in the 'Naskh' style on a slab lying within the enclosure of H. Fazlullah Gosain's shrine in Daira, Bihar town. We have many other 13th century inscriptions in Bihar town. The two beautiful Arabic inscriptions of Hatim Khan, a governor of Bihar, dated 1309 and 1315 and numerous inscriptions of Fīrūz Shah Tughluq, mostly in 'Thulth,' and also of the Sharqī kings of Jaunpur, show the style and calligraphy then in vogue. M. Yazdani says of this script, that it is characterized from the very beginning by its delicacy of form, subtlety of arrangement and by its intricate designs and ornamental flourish.

The early Muslim epigraphs are works of art. The letters are carved in relief in exquisite forms. Such letters as alif, lam, kaf, nun, are elongated and manipulated in some of the later inscriptions to serve the purpose of motifs such as shafts, bows and arrows. All

these may be of great interest to the palaeographists and also to students of history, but the archaeologist has to face disappointment occasioned by the difficulty in tracing things. There is no trace in Bihar of the mosque and the fort built by the Bihar representatives of the Balbani king Kaika-us of Bengal, and the inscriptional stone of the Hisn-i-Haseen (strong fort) has been recently recovered from the Ganges by a fisherman. The large, solid, single-domed brick-built structure at Imadpur (Bihar), which is said to contain the tomb of the conqueror of Bihar and Bengal, still stands without its inscriptional stone tablet. There is no end to such examples.

ARCHITECTURE

Regarding architecture, the Islāmic monuments were arcuate, being based on arches, vaults and domes, as contrasted with the trabeated construction of Hindu edifices whose essential bases were beams and lintels. Nor were they so profusely embellished with ornamental carvings and sculptural details as the Hindu buildings, secular or religious. The gift of Islām to Indian architecture was the 'Minar' (a slender tower), the construction of domes and arches, and exclusive use of concrete and mortar. The Hindus may not have been entirely ignorant of domes and arches, but among them the method of overlapping stones, pillars and lintels was universal.

There are today only a few pre-Moghal buildings in Bihar. Dr Spooner has contributed a valuable paper on the Tirhut types of temple. They were essentially tripartite, consisting of the cells, a small square chamber to contain the sacred image, a simple sloping roof, and a narrow portico. They had 'false arches'. They are not apparently of any real antiquity. There may be some old sacred buildings of the Hindus in Magadha. Cunningham found in 1871 an ancient temple slab *in situ* at Gaya with an inscription, the date of which he calculated as 17th September, A.D. 1342. The 'Buddha Pad' of the great Bodh Gaya temple was found to contain a brief Nāgri inscription on the east side bearing the date 1308.

Historically more important than these is the Mausoleum of Syed Ibrāhim Aba Baker, well known as Malik Bayu, (Pl. XVI, Fig. 40) 'the Muqti of Bihar' (referred to in the 14th century Jaina Sanskrit inscription of Rajgir). It is on the top of the isolated hill of Bihar. Though not a very fine or imposing structure, it is important and not entirely devoid of merit even from the architectural point of view. It represents a synthesis of two different styles of architecture called

Indo-Islāmic. The tomb proper, which stands in the middle of a court measuring 184 ft. N. and S., and 159 ft. E. and W., bounded by a low brick wall, 2 ft. 9 ins. thick, measures 45 ft. square internally. 'The walls, which are 8 ft. 3 ins. thick at the base, taper upward and are surmounted by a bold cornice composed of five courses of carved bricks in stepped projection, the decoration consisting of rosettes and lotus between two dental courses.' 'The dome is curiously elongated, somewhat like the dome of ancient Buddhist stūpas, and is perhaps one of the earliest examples of Muslim domes in this part of the country. Access to the interior of the tomb is gained through two small arched doorways in the south and east. Internally the tomb is 31 ft. 6 ins. square up to a height of about 5½ ft., above which the square is changed into an octagon by means of three concentric arches in each corner. The angles of the octagon are, in turn, filled in with small corbels to form the circle on which the dome is reached. The springing of the dome is marked by mouldings surmounted by a row of shallow niches. On the south and east are doors, and an arched recess occurs in the northern and western walls, the recess to the north being pierced by some twenty small square holes right through the thickness of the walls, a feature which takes the place of the stone 'jalis' (lattice work), so frequently met with in later Muslim tombs. Each alternate side of the octagon is relieved with a small boss on the arches.' The tomb is said to have been built by Sayed Dāud, the eldest of the seven sons of the Warrior Saint by the side of whose grave he also lies buried. As regards the bricks, Mir Qureshi writes, 'In colour and texture they resemble the bricks used in the Monasteries of Nālandā and may indeed have been obtained from the remains of the many Buddhist Vihāras. These bricks have been finely dressed and rubbed to a smooth surface.'



XV

HISTORY AND ADMINISTRATION 1526—1756

A. History

1. Early Moghals and Bihar

THE advent of the Moghals into India heralded a new chapter in the history of Bihar. The reigns of the first two Moghal sovereigns witnessed the fluctuating struggle between the new rivals for mastery over India and the previous ruling Afghan dynasties. The attempts at reviving Afghan supremacy included the brilliant but short-lived illustrious career of Sher Shah and his immediate successor. It could not be sustained by the later and weak successors of Islam Shah. With the restoration of the Moghals, Bihar, was for the first time organized into a separate province of Akbar's empire (1575-76). The reigns of the three successors of Akbar were comparatively peaceful and prosperous for Bihar, and further consolidated the Moghal hold on some of the inaccessible parts of the province such as Chotanagpur. It was only after the death of Aurangzeb (1707) when separatist tendencies once again raised their heads that, towards the middle of the 18th century, Bihar was tagged on to Bengal as before.

We are on firmer ground with regard to material for the history of this period. The Moghal sovereigns had a fairly good sense of history. We have authentic official histories compiled during the reigns of all the great Moghals. Besides these, there are the memoirs of Babar and Jahangir which provide a first-hand narrative of the events, public as well as personal, for their respective periods. The monumental work of Abul Fazal *Akbarnāmā*, and *Āin-i-Akbari*, are in a class by themselves and a veritable mine of information. Much about Bihar can be learnt from these sources.

The Eastern Afghans elected Sultan Muhammad of Bihar, the

son of Daryā Khan, their leader and were in open rebellion against the Imperial Government already during the last two or three years of Ibrāhim's reign. Babar, though master of the Delhi and Agra regions after the battle of Pānīpat (1526) was still threatened from two quarters, the Eastern Afghans and the Rajput confederacy. He decided to tackle the Afghans first. Prince Humayun was despatched to meet the Nuhānī and the Formulī chiefs, supporters of Sultan Muhammad of Bihar, who had occupied Kanauj. They were defeated and pursued at the end of 1526 right up to Ballia and Saran, where the pursuit had to be called off as Humayun's presence was urgently required in the West, where Rana Sanga had become a formidable threat. Leaving a garrison at Jaunpur under Mīr Hussain, supported by Junaid Barlās, Prince Humayun returned to the west in January 1527.

It is not clear as to exactly which parts of Bihar the pursuing Moghal armies had reached during this campaign. Rizqullah (who died in A.D. 1581) and others specifically mention Kharid, a village in the Ballia district, 24 miles from Ballia town, but the name was given to the whole of the riverine tract north and south of the Gogra, and on its left bank down to the Ganges. This means that at least part of Saran district was also overrun. But this area, according to inscriptional evidence belonged to Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shah of Bengal rather than to Sultan Muhammad of Bihar. The Bengal king, realizing the necessity of fortifying Bihar as an advance defence post, overran and occupied Tirhut, after killing its Raja, Kans or Bhup Narain of the Oinwar dynasty in 1527. He appointed his two brothers-in-law Alā-ud-dīn and Makhdūm Alam governors of North and South Tirhut, with Hajipur and Darbhanga as their respective headquarters. South Bihar, including the Shahabad, Gaya and Patna districts, were, however, definitely under Sultan Muhammad.

Conditions in Bihar at this time were peculiarly complex with several rivals for power trying their fortune, sometimes in alliance, against the common enemy, the Moghals, and sometimes plotting against each other. First among them were Sultan Muhammad and his son, Jalāl-ud-dīn, with their able protégé and adviser, Sher Khan. Later the successes of Sher Khan and his humble line led the aristocratic Nuhānīs and Formulīs to support Mahmūd Lodī, the brother of the vanquished Lodī Emperor, Ibrāhim, who came and occupied Bihar. Finally there was the crafty Bengal king who,

while secretly supporting the Afghans, pretended subservience to Babar and was never openly against or hostile towards the Moghals. It is against this background of tangled cross-currents of rivalry and intrigue that the events of succeeding years have to be studied.

After Humayun's return from his campaign of 1526 the Afghans, taking advantage of the preoccupation of the Moghals with the Rajputs in the West, and advanced from the Doāb regions and re-occupied Kanauj. Early in 1528, Babar once again set out on his eastern campaign resolved to punish the Afghans. The campaign extended to both portions of North and South Bihar and during its course, Babar visited Chausa and Buxar. Babar noted in his *Memoirs*, under the date 29th March 1529: 'I visited and rode over last year's [1528] encampment,' and on April 2nd he wrote: 'I landed opposite Chausa at the encampment of last year [1528]' where the 'sun had eclipsed and a fast was kept.' Three days later, on April 5th he noted: 'Last year the army had halted a long time at a station opposite to Buxarah (Buxar) and I crossed the river Ganges by swimming.'

Early in the following year (1529) Mahmud Lodī arrived in Bihar from Bundelkhand at the invitation of powerful Afghan chiefs, particularly Bibban and Bāyazīd. They were jealous and apprehensive of the ascending supremacy of Sher Shah, who had gained the *de facto* mastery of all State affairs since the death of Sultan Muhammad (1528). Mahmud Lodī, the chosen king not only of Bihar but also of Delhi, was acknowledged as such by the great body of Eastern Afghans, as well. Even Sher Shah, the minister of the titular boy king, Jalāl, found it impossible to resist Mahmud Lodī and had to submit and remain content with his personal jāgīr in Sasaram. The Nuhānīs, with their boy king Jalāl and his mother, fled and sought refuge with the Bengal king but, discovering his real intentions, had to flee again to seek Babar's help and to acknowledge his suzerainty. The Bengal king attempted to stop them at Hajipur, but they escaped. Babar received a message from them in April 1529 and he says 'In May next Jalāl arrived with his principal advisers and was rewarded.'

The news of the occupation of Bihar by Mahmud Lodī had reached Babar early in 1529. He was soon joined by numerous Afghans and without opposition became master of Bihar. Babar, therefore, once again set out eastward in 1529. Crossing the river Karamnāśā, he encamped beyond Chausa on April 1 and three days later arrived

at Buxar. Mahmud Lodī, who had pitched his camp on the Son, fled when Babar advanced and 'marched on and dismounted at Pargannah Ari (Arrah).' It was here that he learnt of the presence of the Bengal army at Kharid, posted there at the strategic Gogra-Ganges confluence to check his progress. Babar tried at first to diplomatically ignore the presence of the army of the Bengal ruler, with whom he was at peace, but he could not wait for the armies of Bengal and Mahmud Lodī to separate and so decided on a simultaneous attack. The battle of Ghagra, the third great battle Babar fought and won in India, was fought as much against those who championed the cause of the heriditary Lodī claimant and an Afghan restoration, as against the ambitious and designing Bengal Sultan.

The Afghans were defeated largely through their own internecine quarrels and division into Lodīs and Nuhānīs. Bibban and Bāyazīd, the famous generals of Ibrāhim Lodī, however, escaped and fled westward. They were subsequently to cause more trouble to the Moghals by further attempts at an Afghan restoration. The former Nuhānī chiefs were restored to Bihar, but as feudatories of Babar, who himself recorded the arrangements he made for that State.

Bihar had earlier been given to Khan-i-Zamān Mīrzā, a capable general of Timurid blood. Babar had also conferred upon him royal insignias including the umbrella, the symbol of sovereignty. But for military reasons, after the flight of the refractory Afghans across the Gogra, the Mīrzā was transferred to Jaunpur, from where Junaid Barlās was sent to take over charge of Chunar from Taj Khan Sarangkhani. They were part of the Eastern garrison to prevent Bibban and Bāyazīd, the champions of the cause of Afghan restoration, from marching eastward, south of the Ganges, and from getting north into Saran to join their fellow tribesmen, the Jalwānīs and the Formulīs, who had submitted to Babar and settled down as feudatories Shah Muhammad, the son of Maruf Formulī, received from Saran a special dress of honour, a horse and an allowance as before. Bihar became part of the Moghal Empire and its king Jalīl Khan Nuhānī was made a tributary vassal. He recovered the greater part of his father's possessions after paying one crore to the Moghal treasury for the khālsā land. After settling the affairs of Bihar, Babar left Kundles, near Narhan (Saran district) on 23 May 1529.

Some incidents during Babar's stay in Bihar may be mentioned such as his visit to the shrine at Maner, his swim across the Ganges

at Buxar, his hunting and sightseeing, his joy at watching the water lilies at Arrah and the midnight fishing by torchlight. He had his stages of travel by land and water measured and the distances recorded. One night there was a violent storm which blew down his tent and damaged his *Babarnāmā*. Once he also escaped assassination.

2. The Afghans and Sher Shah

For about half a century (1522-74) Afghans of various tribes, Nuhānīs and Kararānīs, exercised sway, with fluctuating fortune, over a large part of Bihar. The Karkars and the Ishturānīs had made Hajipur and its neighbourhood their home. Under them Bihar asserted itself successfully against Delhi and Bengal and under the Sūrs it was destined to dominate the whole of India. The reigns of Humayun and Babar and the early period of Akbar's reign run concurrently with this development and are inextricably bound with it. The entire period has therefore been treated as a compact whole even though at times it transgresses the chronological order.

It was Sultan Muhammad, son of Daryā Khan, who first appointed Farīd Khan, son of Hasan Khan, a jāgīrdār of Sasaram and tutor to his son Jalāl. He also gave him the title of Sher Khan and several jāgīrs besides his own at Sasaram. After the death of Sultan Muhammad, Sher Khan was restored to his old office of Deputy and Viceregent of his son Jalāl Shah by the ex-queen Dudu, who left the administration of the State entirely in his hands.

Able and resourceful, Sher Khan was also favoured by fortune. He was lucky at fishing in the troubled waters of a domestic quarrel and obtained the strategic fort of Chunar by marrying Lado Malka, the widow of Taj Khan Sarangkhanī.

After the death of Dudu, which occurred soon after, the Nuhānī nobles, already jealous of Sher's increasing ascendancy, conspired with the young ruler whom Sher Khan had completely eclipsed, to overthrow him.

Taking advantage of the confusion caused by Babar's death and Humayun's pre-occupation with his rivals and with the affairs of Gujerat and Kālinjar, the eastern Afghans led by these redoubtable warriors, Bibban and Bāyazīd, raised a formidable rebellion in Bihar. Mahmud Lodī, the brother of Ibrāhim Lodi, was brought from Gaur to Patna, and after occupying it, parcelled it out in jāgīrs among his own partisans. Even Sher Khan had to submit to him and rest

content with his own jāgīr, to which he retired for the time being. The Afghans drove away the Moghal garrison from Jaunpur and even occupied Lucknow. Sher Khan, a shrewd and practical man, realized the futility of opposing the Moghals openly at that stage and not only kept aloof from this Afghan venture but began deliberations with Hindu Beg, Humayun's general, assuring him of his loyalty to the Moghals. Humayun won the battle of Daura in 1531, thanks chiefly to Sher Khan deserting the Afghan cause. Mahmud Lodī fled back to Patna, discomfited and defeated, and later died in Orissa in 1542. Sher Khan's split with the Afghans at this stage was largely due to his strongly resenting the leadership of Bibban and Bāyazīd, who sponsored the cause of his rival, Mahmud Lodī. But though he changed sides, he was not devoid of 'the conception of national interest and national freedom'. He had sufficient confidence in himself to become the champion of the national Afghan cause, once the path was cleared of incompetent rivals and his own inspiring leadership had restored unity among the Afghans. He was shrewd enough not to surrender Chunar to the Moghals.

Although, Babar had foiled the anti-Moghal attempts of Nasrat Shah at the battle of Ghagra, the latter continued to shelter the vanquished Afghans and even entered into negotiations with Bahadur Shah of distant Gujerat to create a diversion by making a simultaneous attack on Humayun's western frontier. But Sher Khan, now strongly entrenched in Bihar, according to Hasan Alī, cherished thoughts of conquering Bengal, and was a powerful force to reckon with. Soon after, a quarrel arose between Mahmud, the incompetent Bengal king, and his governor of Hajipur, Makhdum Alam, over the succession to the throne. Makhdum Alam refused to acknowledge Mahmud Shah. A force was therefore despatched by Mahmud Shah under Qutub Khan, the Bengal governor of Monghyr, for the double purpose of overthrowing Sher Khan with the help of disaffected Nuhānī court nobles and of uprooting the rebellious Hajipur governor. 'A desperate contest took place near Nurpura' says Hasan Alī, 'and Qutub Khan was slain.' This battle took place in 1533.

'This signal victory,' says Hasan Alī, 'excited the jealousy of the nobles of Jalāl Khan's court' who himself was part of the conspiracy to assassinate Sher Khan. Realizing his weakness, however, Jalāl resorted to a strategem. Under the pretext of trying his forces with Sultan Mahmud, he marched towards the latter's capital, attended by his principal chiefs. Arriving there, Jalāl spitefully and with a view to

uprooting Sher Khan, practically surrendered Bihar to the Bengal king. The Sultan deputed Ibrāhim, son of Qutub Khan, to oppose Sher Khan. But Sher Khan felt relieved at this new development. 'Now the kingdom of Bihar has fallen into my hands,' he is reported to have said. Sher Khan, who had his hands already full, sent a small force to the aid of his friend Makhdum Alam who, however, was defeated and killed. Before dying, he entrusted his vast treasure to Sher Khan to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Bengal army. This further augmented Sher Khan's resources.

The flight of Jalāl Khan and his mother to Bengal lowered their prestige in the eyes of many. They were considered traitors while Sher Khan now became the champion of the Afghan national interest. Even high-born Afghans shed their prejudices against Sher Khan, and several nobles such as Masnad-i-Aliza Khan, Azam Humayun Sarwanī, Formulī and others joined him at this stage. He had now to face a still more formidable enemy, for the Bengal king had ordered Qutub's son, Ibrāhim to avenge the blood of his father and to crush Sher Khan's power in Bihar. Strengthened by the support of many notable Afghan chiefs, Sher Khan faced the invading Bengal army. The battle was fought at Sūrajgarh (Monghyr) in 1534. The enemies of Sher Khan were numerically and militarily superior; but he was backed by a band of veteran warriors from the various Afghan tribes and 2,000 fighting Ujjaini Rajputs of Shahabad, led by Raja Gajpati of Jagdishpur. His success was complete, and Sher Khan, now became virtually master of Bihar. He did not as yet assume any royal title but was content for a time with the lesser title of Hazrat-e-Ala for he still had to cross swords with Humayun. The battle of Sūrajgarh however, marked the turning point in Sher Khan's career. It has been justly called by Prof. Qanungo one of the most decisive battles in medieval Indian history.

Not content with extending his influence as far as Monghyr, Sher Khan resolved to push eastwards and wrest from Mahmud all the territories this side of the Teliagarhi and also, if possible, to gain possession of the whole of Bengal. Marching south through the jungle tracts of Jharkhand, while his son Jalāl kept Mahmud's army and fleet engaged for a month at Teliagarhi and covered his strategic detour, Sher Khan appeared before Gaur, with a large army. Taken completely by surprise, the demoralized Bengal king hastened to buy off the bold invader with a huge indemnity of thirteen lakhs.

The emergence of Sher Khan as conqueror of Bengal forced Humayun's attention on him. The Emperor's long absence from eastern India for five critical years and his preoccupation with the rebellious Mīrzās and the redoubtable Bahadur Shah of Gujerat, (in secret alliance with Sher Khan), had afforded Sher Khan a good opportunity for expanding his power and territorial possessions. Realizing the potential danger of the situation, Humayun decided to march eastward. When Sher Khan heard of Humayun's march on Bihar, he hastened to write to Hindu Beg, who had been sent east in advance, assuring him once again of his loyalty to the Moghals also pointing out that he had as yet given no cause for offence to the Moghals and that what he had conquered did not belong to them. Though Sher Khan professed to have given no provocation, Humayun had no doubts as to his political ambitions. True, there were other pressing dangers which kept him engaged in the south and the west, but he should have taken note of the overt act of infidelity in the flight of Qutub Khan and others who had been sent to him as hostages. There is no record that Sher Khan ever sent any tribute, at least for Chunar. But still the slothful Emperor wasted much time at his capital after the Gujerat campaign, and when he did start, instead of advancing straight on Bengal and relieving the besieged Mahmud, he unwisely chose to waste valuable time by himself besieging Chunar which, although the gateway to Bengal, could not have hindered Humayun's march.

Sher Khan, who was busy besieging the fort of Gaur, had returned to Bihar to punish some refractory zamindars, leaving his son, Jalāl Khan, and Khawas Khan to continue the siege. The Afghan pressed the siege with added vigour and Gaur finally fell in April 1538. A rich booty fell into the hands of the victors and Mahmud, whose two sons were also captured, himself fled towards Patna. Sher Khan, who had arrived in Bihar pursued him. Mahmud however, eventually reached Humayun's camp at Darveshpur near Maner. In the meantime, Chunar had fallen and Humayun, entrusting it to Mīrāk Beg, proceeded towards Gaur.

Sher Khan, feeling apprehensive about the safety of the treasure recently acquired at Gaur, dashed to Bengal with a small and mobile force. Sher Khan and the Moghal forces were marching almost in a parallel line towards Bengal, but greater mobility and a more efficient intelligence system enabled Sher Khan to by-pass the Moghal army and reach Gaur much in advance of them. According to *Reyāz-us-*

Salātīn, he now brought Gaur completely under him. Sher Khan, although in complete control of Bengal, realized his untenable and dangerous position with the pursuing Moghal forces close on his heels. With masterly strategy and tactics he chalked out a plan of campaign for the impending struggle. He would let the Moghals advance into Bengal without much opposition while he himself would retire to Bihar to cut off the enemy's rear. But for this to succeed, he first needed a safe place to keep his family and treasure. His quick and discerning eye selected the strong fort of Rohtas.

The peace negotiations between the Imperialists and Sher Khan having failed, Humayun proceeded towards Bengal. At Maner he carefully distributed his army to intercept the retreat of Afghan forces from Bengal, while some distinguished nobles such as Jahangir Quli, Tārdī Beg, and Barti Barlās marched ahead of the main army under the Emperor himself. Sher Khan, however, was watching the movements of the Imperial forces. He proceeded to Gaur, after deputing his son, Jalāl, to hold the Garhi Pass, until he had transferred the treasures of Bengal to Rohtas. Jalāl Khan and the able generals of Sher Khan performed their task remarkably well, and Sher Khan succeeded. It was his plan to let the Moghals proceed to Bengal and then he could operate in the rear, occupy Bihar and cut off their communications. The Emperor fell into the trap and on Jalāl's evacuation of Bengal, he advanced and occupied it (July 1539).

So enamoured was Humayun of the beautiful climate and surroundings of Gaur that he changed its name to Junnatabad. Meanwhile, Sher Khan besieged Chunar, occupied Vārānasi and even sent an army to occupy Kanauj. Much more alarming was the news that Mīrzā Hindāl had gone to Agra and revolted.

Informed of these dangerous developments, Humayun entrusted the government of Bengal to Jahangir Beg, while he himself marched westward. The rains and the harassing tactics of the mobile Afghan units, who cut off the supply sources, caused much havoc in the ranks of the distracted Moghal army. They had to march through mud and there was a dreadful shortage of food. The Moghals at last encamped at Chausa, east of the Karmanāśā, four miles west of Buxār, while Sher Khan pitched his camp at Behea. The opposing armies faced each other for several months during which Humayun, realizing his weak position, made several attempts at compromise with Sher Khan. Sher Khan, however, made a surprise attack on the Moghals on 26th June 1539, and completely annihilated them. Humayun,

finding the bridge demolished, threw himself into the river but was saved by Nizam Saqqa. He then proceeded to Agra. Sher Khan marched on Bengal and driving away its Moghal governor, Jahangir Beg, occupied Bihar and Bengal and assumed the royal insignias and the title Sher Shah. Next year, in 1540, he thoroughly defeated Humayun at the battle of Bilgrām and forced him eventually to leave India and seek refuge in Persia.

His strong and efficient administration and his regard for the welfare of the peasants, increased the revenue of Sher Shah's territories fourfold and kept his subjects happy. By stopping forced labour, remitting various kinds of imposts, taking no dues other than the land tax, and protecting the just rights of the ryots in his ancestral jāgīrs, he had earned the gratitude of the people. In the province of Bihar he based his administration on the firm foundation of justice and equity and declared as his chief concern the welfare of his subjects. In the affairs of State, he did not take into account ties of kinship. Those who deviated from the path of submission were punished according to their guilt. By paying his soldiers regularly and treating them generously, he won their affection. Within the frontiers of Bihar no one dared disobey him.

Sher Shah met an untimely death at Kālinjar in 1545 and was succeeded by his son, Islam Shah, who ruled over practically the whole of North India for eight years and died in 1553. Both were great warriors, capable administrators and enlightened rulers. They have justly been credited with many new and useful reforms as well as numerous works of public utility. They have left many magnificient monuments in Sasaram, their final resting place, and in numerous other places such as Patna, Hilsa, Telhara, Amthua, Shergarh and so on.

Unfortunately, as Emperors they were pre-occupied with many pressing problems in places other than Bihar. This is very seldom referred to in contemporary histories. The province, however, attained peace and stability during their reigns. Bihar, during this period, was the home of many pious saints and distinguished scholars.

But there was a change for the worse immediately after the death of Islam Shah. His twelve-year-old son and successor, Fīrūz, was killed by his maternal uncle Adil Shah, who seized the throne. This shameful murder of his infant nephew, gave him the name Adali (foolish) or even Andhali (intellectually blind). Adali's infamous deed did not, however, go unopposed. Ibrāhim Khan Sūr and Ahmad Khan

Sūr, the two brothers-in-law of Adali, and Muhammad Khan Gauria of Bengal, decided to dispute the claims of the new Emperor. Shujāat Khan of Malwa also decided to throw off his yoke. There was utter chaos and confusion in the land, with the various Afghan tribes engaged in internecine struggles. Of these the Kararānīs and the Karkars, whose field of activity was Bihar, claim our special attention.

Tāj Khan and Sulaimān Khan were two of the six sons of Jalāl Khan Kararānī, a grandee of Islam Shah. Tāj Khan, according to Badauni, was a distinguished scholar of his time. According to Abul Fazal, he was sent twice by Islam Shah against the father of Isā Khan of Bengal, who ruled in the Bhati regions and who had defied imperial authority. Tāj Khan defeated and killed his opponent. Later he was raised to the position of governor of Sambhal. On Islam Shah's orders, he carried out the heinous murder of Sher Shah's famous general Khawās Khan.

An outbreak of anarchy and murder forced him to flee from the Adali's court at Gwalior. He was pursued by Hīmū, who routed him at Chibramau, eighteen miles south of Farukhābād, in 1553. While Hīmū returned to Gwalior, Tāj Khan continued his eastward march by way of Chunar and, joined by his brothers, plundered and ravaged the khālsā lands. A large number of Afghan adventurers joined the Kararānīs. Adil Shah, receiving this information, marched from Gwalior, and despatched an army under Hīmū to punish the Kararānī rebels. Hīmū once again defeated the united forces of Tāj Khan and Sulaimān Khan. In the meantime, Adil Shah's attention was diverted by a coup of his brother-in-law, Ibrāhim Khan, who declared himself king at Delhi and he had to march back to tackle this new and alarming development. Tāj Khan and Sulaimān Khan, though twice defeated, were thus saved from complete annihilation.

According to Neamatullah, Tāj Khan after his second defeat fled to Bengal, and treacherously killed Salīm Shah Karkar, Adali's governor of Bengal. Assuming sovereign power, he left his brother Sulaimān at Gaur and himself came to Hajipur, which had become a rendezvous of the various Afghan tribes which had fled from the west after the return of the Moghals to India, and the successive defeats they had inflicted upon the Afghan forces. Some 3000 Karkar horsemen, after deserting Adali, had come along with their families and pitched their tents in the 'vicinity of Hajipur', 'on the Ganges'. The Kararānīs who held the adjacent regions looked with apprehension

on the coming of this tribe as possible contestants for mastery of the region. The Karkars, on the other hand, remembering the perfidious murder of Salīm Shah Karkar and Fateh Khan Batni by the Kararānīs, were extremely suspicious of them. There was eventually a fight between the two tribes. Although initially defeated, the Karkars were joined by another Afghan tribe, the Ishturānīs, who had also settled in the region, and these together defeated the Kararānīs. They captured considerable booty including many elephants which they sent to Adil Shah. After the débacle of Pānīpat (1556), Adil Shah had lost all chances of retaining his hold over Delhi and Agra and was staying at Chunar.

In the meantime, Khizr Khan had celebrated his juloos by declaring himself king under the title of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Bahadur Shah, some time after the defeat and death of his father, Muhammad Khan Sūr, at the hands of Hīmū at Chapparghatta, near Kalpi, in 1554. He hastened to Gaur in 1555 and established himself in Bengal after defeating and killing Shāhbāz Khan Sūr, who had been sent as governor of Bengal by Adil Shah. The next year he marched to avenge his father and with the help of Sulaimān, the governor of South Bihar, defeated and killed Adil Shah at the battle of Sūrajgarh near Monghyr in 1556. Tāj Khan was appointed governor of Bengal by the new king Bahadur Shah who continued to rule till 1561. An inscription of Masnad-Alī Tāj Khan, son of Jamāl Khan Kararānī, dated 1559-60, records the erection of a mosque in the reign of Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn Bahadur Shah. Tāj Khan retained his office and remained on good terms with Bahadur Shah and his immediate successor Jalāl Shah (1561-63). He, however, defeated and killed the usurper Ghiyās-ud-dīn and firmly established himself in Bengal. He assumed the title of Hazrat-e-Alī, and died the next year (1564).

The most famous and the greatest of the six sons of Jamāl Kararānī was Sulaimān Khan, who was appointed governor of South Bihar in 1545, when Muhammad Khan Sūr was appointed governor of Bengal and North Bihar. The two were on friendly terms, as is evidenced by an inscription of Muhammad Khan Sūr dated 1554 and found in Biharsharif, the seat of Sulaimān's government. Muhammad Khan refused to acknowledge Adil Shah and, assuming kingship under the title of Muhammad Shah, attacked Jaunpore, but was defeated and killed by Hīmū. Sulaimān, however, managed to retain his hold on South Bihar during the stormy political fluctuations

of the following decades. On the death of Tāj Khan, Sulaimān amalgamated the two provinces of Bihar and Bengal, and transferred his capital to Khawaspur Tandah, situated in Purnea to the west of Malda.

Sulaimān was a shrewd and wise ruler. In spite of a complete hold over the Eastern Subahs and the virtual assumption of sovereignty, he showed apparent submission to Akbar and occasionally sent him presents. He contented himself with the title of Hazrat-e Alā (Supreme Chief). In 1565 he occupied the fort of Rohtas, but on hearing of Akbar's march to the east to punish Alī Qulī Shaibānī he wisely withdrew. Later on, in 1567, he attacked and conquered Orissa, placing it under Qutub Khan. In the following year, he invaded and plundered Cooch Behar. After a vigorous and successful reign over Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, he died in 1573, loved and respected by his subjects and contemporaries.

The rich heritage left by Sulaimān was abused and the wise policy he pursued abandoned by his son. The short reign of Bāyazīd, the eldest son and successor of Sulaimān, was characterized by the abañdonment of the wise and diplomatic relationship with Akbar. Bāyazīd antagonized the Moghal Emperor by having the *Khutba* read in his own name. Owing to lack of moderation and a family quarrel, he was put to death by Amois led by Hansu. The latter was in turn disposed of by Ludi Khan.

Dāūd Khan, the second son of Sulaimān and the successor of Bāyazīd, also continued along these disastrous lines. Proud and haughty, he neglected the sane advice of his father's able vizier, Ludi. He declared himself 'Badshah' and openly antagonized Akbar by sacking Zamania. Akbar, who was then in Gujerat, ordered Munim Khan to invade Bihar and punish Dāūd. Munim Khan marched from Chausa and arrived in the neighbourhood of Patna and Hajipur. Gujar Khan had put up a rival to the throne of Bihar, the son of Bāyazīd, and had opened negotiations for help with Munim Khan. Ludi Khan, however, won over Gujar and saved the situation, Ludi, despite his dissatisfaction with Dāūd, managed to patch up a peace conditioned by the payment of tribute worth two lakhs in cash and one lakh in goods and by withdrawal of the Moghals from Bihar. The peace, however, proved to be an uneasy truce, for neither party was satisfied with the terms.

Qutlū Khan and Sridhar, the two evil advisers of Dāūd, poisoned

his mind against Ludi Khan, who was further alienated from Dāūd, because of the murder of his son-in-law, Yūsuf, son of Tāj Khan. Neamatullah says that Ludi was planning to revolt while he was in the fort of Rohtas, and that he was suspected of conspiring with Munim Khan, the Moghal general, who had returned towards Patna and Hajipur on Akbar's orders. Raja Todar Mall had already been sent there to help him in the conquest of Bihar and Bengal. The Khan-i-Khanan hastened to Bihar and was opposed at the confluence of the Son, the Sarju and the Gogra, where a battle took place. It was at about this time that Dāūd, at the instigation of Qutub, wrote soothing letters to Ludi Khan and, having lulled his suspicions and lured him into his own camp, killed him. Ludi, even while dying, advised Dāūd to make a surprise attack on the Moghals and score a victory over them. Dāūd, however, fell back on Patna fort, parts of which he had repaired and made his bastion of defence.

It is not fair to charge him with cowardice for 'shutting himself in the fort of Patna,' for his spirited defence so prolonged the siege that on the request of Munim Khan, the Emperor himself appeared on the scene to conduct the siege personally. His quick and discerning eye at once saw the crucial importance of capturing the Hajipur fort, for a successful termination of the siege. Khan-i-Alam who was entrusted with the task, succeeded in defeating and killing Fateh Khan and capturing Hajipur. The head of Fateh Khan Barha was sent to Dāūd, who now realized the hopelessness of the situation. He was led out by his men through the gates into the waiting boats and rushed to Bengal. The Imperialists then seized the town and fort of Patna.

The Emperor having appointed Munim Khan Governor of Bihar, and ordered him to pursue Dāūd into Bengal, he left Bihar for Agra. Akbar, also left Muzaffar Khan and some others to reduce the fort of Rohtas and round up the remaining Afghans in Bihar. Raja Todar Mall was associated with Munim Khan in these campaigns. The demoralized, fleeing Afghan forces failed to make any bold and effective stand against the pursuing Moghals and the strongholds of the Afghans fell one by one. Raja Sangrām Singh of Kharagpur, Pūran Mall of Gidhaur and many of the other landowners of Bihar, submitted to the Moghals.

Although Dāūd's flight from Patna practically meant the loss of Bihar to the Afghans and the end of all organized resistance, the consolidation of the Moghal hold on Bihar was by no means complete.

The Moghal hold was confined to a few selected and major centres while vast areas in the interior were a constant prey to roving bands of Afghans, the remnants of the Afghan forces. The Imperial authority was frequently challenged and worsted even in these selected centres. Sri J. N. Sarkar has summed up the situation in these words; 'The history of these years 1575-95, is a sickening monotonous tale of fights among local officers with varying results but no final decision, and the temporary expansion and retreat of Imperial power, while the weak and the innocent suffered at the hands of both the parties.'

At last by a series of campaigns Muzaffar Khan Turbatī succeeded in destroying the opposition forces in Bihar. This success aroused the jealousy of Munim Khan, who wanted to remove him somehow from Bihar. Taking advantage of a previous Firman of Akbar, Munim Khan ordered Muzaffar Khan to proceed to the Imperial Court. The latter had, however, sent his own dispatch of the successes he had won. He was favoured with a reassuring letter from the Emperor and finally appointed, in the 20th reignal year, governor of Bihar, from Chausa to the pass of Teliagarhi. During the two years of Muzaffar Khan's governorship of Bihar, the course of affairs there was considerably influenced by certain events in Bengal. Munim Khan had fought and won the great battle of Tukaroi, in March 1575. Dāūd had submitted to the Moghals and was allowed to retain Orissa as an Imperial vassal by the treaty of Cuttack. But the Afghans had not laid down their arms. Although repeatedly defeated by Muzaffar Khan in North Bihar, they were still strong in Jharkhand and some other places in Bengal. The gallant Junaid Kararānī was biding his time in Jharkhand. Munim Khan, hearing of a revival of Junaid's activities, left Gaur to chastize him but died on the way at Tanda on 23 October 1575. This was a signal for a fresh outburst of Afghan opposition.

Dāūd Khan rose again, occupying the whole country up to Teliagarhi. Following the death of Munim Khan, the Moghal officers in Bengal, deserted the disease-ridden Afghan-invested country and retreated to Teliagarhi. Their retreat was checked at this point by the tact and persuasion of Raja Todar Mall and Khan-i-Jahān, governor of Bengal. The strategic Teliagarhi pass was reoccupied. Muzaffar Khan, the governor of Bihar, was ordered by the Emperor to advance from Patna and reinforce Khan-i-Jahān. The armies of Bihar and Bengal met in July 1576. The two governors held

discussions and decided on an immediate attack on the Afghans. In the ensuing battle of Akhmahal (Rajmahal), the governor of Bihar held the right wing of the Imperial forces against Junaid. The battle ended in the final defeat of the Afghans. Junaid was killed and Dāūd was captured and beheaded. The period of Afghan rule thus came to an end in Bihar and Bengal.

3. Bihar under the Great Moghals

Akbar (1556-1605)

Akbar, who possessed an extraordinary degree of statesmanship, realized the importance of Bihar from strategic as well as other points of view at a time when the Afghan menace was a force to be reckoned with. After Dāūd's flight from Patna, he made the province a distinct Subah of his empire (1575). The events of the early years of Akbar's reign which resulted in the consolidation of the Moghal hold on Bihar, have already been noticed above. Muzaffar Khan, after distributing extensive jāgīrs among the Khans and chiefs who had been sent to him as auxiliaries, left Bihar in compliance with an Imperial Firman in September 1577. He was succeeded by Shujaat Khan who, after a period of office of only a few months, was transferred to Mālwa, some time in March 1578. According to Nizam-ud-dīn (A.D. 1592-93), Khan-i-Azam Mīrzā Azīz Koka was sent in June 1580 to take over the government of Bihar and continued there till 1582.

Bihar during this period was virtually in the hands of a number of military commanders and fiefholders. Masum Khan Kābuli held Patna and its neighbourhood; Mohib Ali Khan Rohtasi was in charge of Rohtas (1577-80); Mir Muizzul-Mulk, his brother Mīr Alī Akbar and Samauji Khan were jāgīrdars in Arrah district; Saīd Khan Badakshi and Arab Bahadur were jāgīrdārs in Sasaram; Shāham Khan was in Hajipur; Sufaid Badakshi and his son Bahadur were in Tirhut and its neighbourhood, while Saādat Alī Khan and Hājī Golabi had their respective fiefs in the unidentified perganas of Tamodan and Diwara.

The absence of a controlling authority and a unifying force, which an officially appointed governor alone could furnish, had its inevitable result. The chaotic condition of Bihar compelled the Emperor early in 1579 to send Mulla Taiyab, and appoint Rai Purkhotam and Shamsher Khan to be respectively the Dewan and Bakshi and in charge of the Khālsā revenue of Bihar and Hajipur. Both Abul

Fazal and Badauni are of the opinion that the choice of these narrow-minded men as revenue officials of Bihar proved to be a mistake for they 'ignorantly fixed themselves up at Patna and plunged into wide expansion of cupidity.' Of course they had a difficult task to perform. The regulation concerning the branding of horses introduced by Shāhbāz Khan while he was Mīr Bakshi, the new system of finance requiring a thorough investigation into the titles of jāgīrdārs, and the re-establishment of revenue-free holdings had been resented and frustrated by vested interests. There was a more specific reason for the ill feeling among the jāgīrdārs of Bengal and Bihar. Akbar, at the time of Dāūd's rebellion and in consideration of the special circumstances, had sanctioned a 100% and 50% increase in their pay respectively; but Khwaja Mansoor, the Imperial Dewan, had cut them down to 50% and 20%. Dissension was also aggravated by the religious innovations of the Emperor, although they were not the primary cause. What really brought matters to a head and ended in revolt was the over-strict and tactless enforcement of the new regulations. Reports of the revolt from jāgīrdārs and soldiers in the eastern province reached the Emperor in March 1580. Raja Todar Mall, Masūm Khan, and Tarson Khan, the Faujdār of Ghazipur and Jaunpur, and several others were ordered by the Emperor to proceed to Bihar and quell the rebellion. There followed a series of local risings but they were all eventually crushed and order restored.

With this state of affairs in Bihar and Bengal, Khan-i-Azam Mīrzā Aziz Koka was sent as governor of Bihar (1580). His is one of those few cases of a ruler of Bihar being put in charge of Bengal as well. His arrival in Patna was delayed by the rebellion of Dalpat Sahi, the then Ujjaini chief. About the same time, Shāhbāz Khan was sent to Bihar where Khan-i-Azam asked him to join hands with him in reducing the rebel of Jagdishpur. The stronghold of the rebel was captured and plundered. But dissension arose between Khan-i-Azam and Shāhbāz Khan. The absence of cordiality between them prevented any joint action being taken against those who opposed Moghal authority in Bihar. While the Khan and Raja Todar Mall set up their headquarters at Hajipur, Shāhbāz Khan stayed at Patna. He went on granting jāgīrs and promotions to his followers and assumed airs as if he were the Subehdar of the province. Only the tact and persuasion of the Raja saved the situation. Todar Mall left Bihar to wait on the Emperor (September 1581) and was appointed

Wazir. Khan-i-Azam continued to govern Bihar, assisted by Hakīm Humam and Hakīm Alī who were sent in October 1582, to serve as Sadars in North and South Bihar. He left Bihar soon after to congratulate the Emperor on the conquest of Kabul and was received in February 1582. His absence was, however, utilized by mischief-makers who once again rose up in Bihar and Bengal. They took Hajipur from the men of Khan-i-Azam and also captured some other towns. On receiving the news, the Emperor ordered Khan-i-Azam with Tarson Khan, Shaham Khan and others back to Bihar. Before the arrival of Khan-i-Azam, the Imperial servant in Bihar, Mohib Alī Khan and others, working in combination, had already worsted the rebels.

Khan-i-Azam again left Bihar to call on the Emperor in December 1583 and was transferred to Mālwa. He was succeeded in Bihar by Sayeed Khan Chaghta, who was given a command of 3000 men and also Hajipur and its neighbourhood. The first period of Sayeed Khan's governorship of Bihar was of a short duration. He was ordered to go to Bengal with Sadiq Khan and others to help Shāhbāz Khan against Isā Khan of Bhati. Sadiq Khan and Shāhbāz Khan, however fell out among themselves and on the Emperor's mediation Shāhbāz returned to Bihar, but was soon ordered to proceed to Bengal to take over charge there. In Bihar Sayeed Khan was replaced by Mīrzā Yūsuf Mashbadi in September 1585. The Mīrzā, however, did not stay for long and Sayeed Khan was appointed governor for the second time in March 1589, but again was transferred to Bengal the same year.

Kuer Man Singh was then sent as governor of Bihar, where he and his uncle Raja Bhagwan Das had earlier been granted fiefs. The Kuer received the title of Raja and the rank of commander of 5000 men on the death of his uncle in November 1589. According to Abul Fazal, 'Man Singh administered excellently and all refractories became obedient.' There is a very important Sanad, dated 1590, of Raja Man Singh granting 15 bighas of land to the custodian of the mausoleum of Mamoon Bhanja, in Jarwha (Hajipur). The Sanad is bilingual, the text being written in Persian and Hindi. The Hindi text reading; 'Fi bigha maznu piche sukka ak lijyo, ara aur kachu na...' is an important specimen of early Hindustani. Man Singh's son, Jagat Singh, had charge of Patna town and rendered great service when Sultan Quli Qalmag, the Bengal rebel, entered Bihar and plundered Tajpur and Purnan.

Farrukh Khan, the Faujdar of Darbhanga, was powerless to oppose the rebel, but Jagat Singh routed and pursued the rebels.

In his second expedition to Orissa in 1591, Raja Man Singh was joined by Gangaram Singh at Kharagpur and by Pūran Mall of Gidhaur, Ramnarain Sisodia and many other landholders of Bihar. Sayeed Khan, the governor of Bengal, along with several other officers also joined him. Soon after, in 1594, the Raja was recalled by the Emperor and transferred to Bengal. The author of *Maāsir-ul-umara*, has mentioned the interesting episode of the Raja's meeting with the saint H. Shah Daulat, at Monghyr, on his way to Orissa. The talks they had revealed the Raja's deep and extensive knowledge of the Quran.

Sayeed Khan, who was replaced by Raja Man Singh in Bengal, became for the third time governor of Bihar (March 1594). He appears to have left Bihar in 1599. It was after his departure that Prince Dānyāl, who had been appointed to the Subah of Allahabad, proceeded to Bihar to put down Dalpat Sahi, who had again shown defiance. Dalpat Sahi was defeated and subdued. He gave his daughter in marriage to Prince Dānyāl, and she, according to Abul Fazal, gave birth to a son (1604), whom Akbar named Farhang Hoshang.

Prince Salim, the heir to the throne, figures prominently in Bihar during the confused period between the departure of Sayeed Khan and the appointment of Asif Khan, the last Imperial governor under Akbar. This rebellious prince, advised by Man Singh to sieze the eastern province, arrived at Allahabad in 1600 and was soon in control of all the regions up to Hajipur and Patna. He took for himself more than 30 lakhs of the khalsa revenue in Bihar and gave the Subah to the ill-fated Qutub-ud-dīn Kokaltash. Prince Salim appears to have made extensive grants of land in Bihar during his stay in those parts. Two of his Firmans, dated 1601 and 1604, are known, where under the title of Salim Shah he made a grant of Madad-i-Mash land to the descendant of the famous Pīr Damaria family. Later in 1604 he appointed Sharif Khan governor of Bihar. But he had scarcely taken over charge when he was displaced by Asif Khan [the last governor of Bihar under Akbar.]

JAHANGIR (1605-1627)

During the reign of Jahangir, Bihar remained an independently administrative unit of the Moghal Empire. Lala Beg, also called

Beg Bahadur, was appointed governor of Bihar to succeed Asif Khan within a month of Jahangir's accession to the throne. He suppressed the rebellion of Sangrām Singh of Kharagpur and for this distinguished service was promoted and given the title, Jahangir Quli. According to Haider Malik Jawara, the author of *History of Kashmir*, it was during this period that Mahrun Nisa (Nūr Jahān), the widow of Sher Afghan, the Turk Faujdār of Burdwan, passed through Darbhanga on her way to Delhi, following the death of her husband. Local tradition still associates with this visit the construction of Noor-Sarai and of a royal mosque. Beg Bahadur was transferred to Bengal and was succeeded by Islam Khan who in turn was succeeded by Afzal Khan, the son of Abul Fazal, who held the province till 1612 when the region of Raja Man Singh was assigned to him. Another important Jāgīrdār of Bihar at this time was Safdar Khan, who is frequently mentioned by the Emperor in his *Memoirs*. Kishwer Khan, the commander of Rohtas, was promoted and appointed Faujdār of the Ujjainia country. The Ujjainias under Raja Madhokar, probably oppressed by Afzal Fazal, took advantage of his temporary absence, to start a rebellion; but they were defeated and Raja Madhokar was killed. Afzal Khan under Imperial orders sent an army to help Islam Khan in 1612. Soon after he fell ill and was recalled to the east where he died. The next governor was Jafar Khan, described by Jahangir as one of 'the trustworthy house-born ones and foster children.' His term would have been uneventful but for a raid he led into Chotanagpur and his futile attempt to make himself governor of Bengal. The succeeding governor, Ibrāhim Khan, a brother of Nūr Jahān, was despatched to Bihar in 1665. His most notable achievement was the conquest of Kukradesh (Chotanagpur) and the acquisition of the diamond mines which lay in the river beds of that region. He was promoted, given the title of Fateh Jang and raised to the governorship of Bengal (1617).

Next followed the brief and uneventful governorship of Jahangir Quli, son of Khan-i-Azam Mīrza Azīz Koka (1617-18, and 1619). He was succeeded by Muqarrab Khan who, because of his previous contact with English traders at Surat, was on good terms with them in Bihar. He was interested in getting information regarding the commodities the English had for sale. He was fond of tapestry curtains, broadcloth, looking glasses, swords and small arms. Indeed the English sold most of the goods to him at very low rates. The English looked on Muqarrab Khan as one of their best friends. In a letter from

Patna (12 July 1620) Robert Hughes writes, 'Since my coming I have visited the governor, Muqarrab Khan, who seems to be wonderous pleasant for our arrival here and was inquisitive to know what goods I had brought with me.' It was in March 1621 that the Emperor mentions having given Bihar to his son, Prince Parvez. Hughes wrote on 3 March 1621 about the recall of the old governor and the 'amal' (authority) of the new.

Prince Parvez, the first Moghal prince to rule Bihar, gave his name to Parvezabād, now known as Paleza. He had Bihar in his jāgīr and governed the province assisted by Mukhlis Khan, his Dewan, and Sher Khan and Iftekar Khan, his Faujdārs. One of his chief officers was Nazar Bahadur, an Afghan of the rank of commander of 1,500 men, who in 1626 constructed the famous building of Sangi Masjid, still existing and better known as Pathar-ki-Masjid. The Champānagar (Bhagalpur) mausoleum of a saint on a high mound representing perhaps a stūpa was also built during his time. Another mosque of Jahangir's reign still standing is the one built by Masūm Khan in 1614, at Guzri, Patna city. Older than Shah Jahan and born of a Muslim mother, Parvez was his father's favourite and the prospective heir. Learning of the Emperor's illness and 'being unable to restrain himself' he left Bihar, in October 1620, without waiting for a Firman. He presented himself before the Emperor who, very pleased with this show of affection, sent him back to Bihar in 1621. When Shah Jahan revolted he was deputed against him, along with Mahabat Khan and others.

After unsuccessful operations elsewhere, Shah Jahan turned his attention to the Eastern Provinces. Bengal and Orissa fell into his hands and he sent a Firman to Mukhlis Khan, the brother of Fidai Khan, the Dewan and Deputy of Parvez in Bihar, demanding the surrender of Patna. Raja Bhīmsen easily obtained possession of the Subah and by the time the rebel prince reached Patna, many Jāgīrdārs of Parvez had joined him. Raja Narain Mall, one of the ancestors of the Raja of Dumrhon, joined Shan Jahan. Khan-i-Daurān was appointed Subahdār of Bihar while Darbhanga and Hajipur were assigned as jāgīrs to Abdullah Khan. Shah Jahan like his father, appears to have made extensive grants of land in Bihar. However, he was defeated and driven out of Bihar. His generals, Muzaffar Khan and Khidmat Parasat Khan on his own orders surrendered the fort of Rohtas. Soon after, Parvez also left Bihar and was succeeded by Mīrzā Rustam Safri, the last governor of Bihar during Jahangir's

reign. The Mīrzā, poetically surnamed Masūd Fidai, was pensioned off as too old on an annual recompense of Rs 1,20,000. His eldest son, Mīrzā Murad, was given the title Iltefat Khan by Jahangir and, receiving an annual pension of Rs 40,000 from Shah Jahan, settled at Patna, where he built a mansion on the banks of the Ganges. His tomb, in the compound of the General Hospital of Patna, is still an object of veneration. The Mohalla of Muradpore, Patna, also bears his name.

SHAH JAHAN (1627-1658)

On Shah Jahan's accession, in February 1628, Khan-i-Alam was appointed governor of Bihar. The only event of importance during his brief term of office was the granting the title of Raja along with a Mansab to Pratap Singh Ujjainia, son of Dalpat Sahi Ujjainia, and the appointment of Mukhtar Khan to the Faujdari of Sarkar Monghyr. The other important officials of the province were Aquidat Khan, the Dewan, and Shujāat Khan, the Faujdar of Tirhut. According to Abdul Hamid Lahori, the official historian, Khan-i-Alam failed to discharge his duties efficiently and was recalled within a year. Mīrzā Safi, better known as Saif Khan, was appointed his successor in September 1628 and was in office till May 1632. In his capacity of governor of Gujerat, he had granted a Parwānā for free trade to the English.

Peter Mundy, who came to Patna in 1632, shortly after Saif's transfer to Allahabad, makes mention of the esteem in which Saif was held by the people of Bihar and contrasts 'the tyrannical and the exacting régime' of his successor, Abdullah Khan Fīrūz Jung. Indeed, Saif Khan proved himself to be one of the best governors of Bihar under the Moghals and his governorship of slightly more than four years was characterized by peace, prosperity and splendour in the province. The author of *Maāsir-ul-umara* refers to 'the lofty public buildings that this governor constructed at Patna.' Peter Mundy refers to the Madrasa or College and the mosque attached to it, which Saif built. The mosque bears an inscription the chronogram of which yields the date 1629. The Arabic College, of which the mosque was a part continued to be a great seat of learning till the time of Haibat Jung, the father of Siraj-ud-Daula, its principal being regarded as an authority on Muslim law till even later times. The Shāhi Idgah in Patna city, with an inscription dated 1628-29, was built within an incredibly short time on Saif's

orders. Shaikh Alī Hazin, the famous poet of the 18th century, resided here during his stay in Patna. It was during Saif's régime also that two Brāhmaṇas of Tirhut, now proved to have been the ancestors of the Raja of Darbhanga, gave a display of their remarkable memories and intellectual powers at the Imperial Court and were rewarded. They claimed to have the power not only of quoting word for word and in the same arrangement ten fresh lines of *Hind* poems (Maithili or Sanskrit) composed by ten different poets after hearing them only once, but also of composing on the spot similar lines in similar rhyme bearing on the same subject. They were put to the test more than once and vindicated their claim. Another son of Bihar who also acquired prominence by, his gallantry in distant campaigns, was Raja Roz Adzun, the convert son of Raja Sangrām, whose mosque with a dated inscription is still extant in Kharagpur, Monghyr.

The good and capable governor, Saif Khan was transferred to Allahabad in 1632 and was succeeded by Abdullah Khan. He remained in charge of the province for seven years (1639) but was frequently away from the province, on expeditions to Ratanpur (C. P.) and the Bundela country. He had to remain out of Patna for six months to tackle the situation arising out of the revolt of the Ujjainia chief, Raja Pratap. The Ujjainia Raja, although faced with heavy odds, put up a spirited opposition but was eventually defeated and taken captive along with his wife after protracted and bloody fighting. The Raja was taken to Patna and executed at the western gate of the city. His wife was given in marriage to the governor's son.

The next governor of Bihar was Shaista Khan (1639-43). One of his officers, Hājīchand, was very fond of building decorated mosques, two of which bearing inscriptions dated 1646, stand at Colonelgunj and Babuagunj Mohallas in Patna city. The most important event of Shaista Khan's régime and that of the next governor Itiqad Khan, was the subjugation of the Palamau area. Itiqad Khan, in addition to his governorship of Bihar, was given charge of Bengal also. Bihar since 1575-76 had never been tagged on to Bengal till the appointment of Azīm-us-Shan towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign. Later, on Itiqad Khan's transfer to Bengal, Azam Khan was appointed governor of Bihar in 1646, although his actual arrival in Bihar was delayed. He in turn was replaced by Sayeed Khan, who held office for four years. The régimes were not characterized by any notable events. Jafar Khan was appointed governor in February 1651. He built the famous Bagh-i-Jafar Khan at Patna. The single-domed Dundi

Bazar mosque, dated 1651, also reminds us of his régime. Although he was replaced by Zulfiqar Khan in 1656, we find him returning to the Imperial Court earlier in 1654.

Zulfiqar's successor was Allahwardi Khan (sent to Bihar in March 1657), whose period of governorship of Bihar coincides with the period of wars among the sons of Shah Jahan. On the westward advance of Prince Shuja, Allahwardi Khan at first fell back on Banaras; he later joined and accompanied Shuja. In the meantime, Dārā sent his son, Sulaimān Shikoh, with Bahadur Khan and Ikhlas Khan to oppose Shuja's westward march. While the two armies stood facing each other with Shuja sagely entrenched in his jungle encampment in the village of Bahadurpur near Banaras, Dārā wrote to Jaisingh, the chief supporter of Sulaimān Shikoh to seek Raja Kokalat Ujjainia of Bhojpur's help in clearing the surrounding jungle and cutting off the enemy's supplies. In the ensuing battle of Bahadurpur, Allahwardi Khan played a dubious role and Shuja was defeated. Allahwardi was, however, made to accompany Shuja in retreat and was subsequently executed on suspicion of disloyalty. Concurrent developments of far greater importance, for instance, Dārā's defeat at the battle of Samogarh and Aurangzeb's march to the Imperial capital, were happening elsewhere in India. Shuja once again sallied forth from Bengal, and occupied the whole of Bihar, his triumphal westward march being stopped only after the battle of Khajwa in January 1659.

Aquil Khan the author of *Ālamgīr Nāmā*, is our sole but reliable authority for arrangements made by Shuja in Bihar. He says that Nūrul Hasan Khan was appointed governor of Bihar. We do not know the exact date of his appointment but he is definitely mentioned as being governor of Bihar at the time of Shuja's retreat after the battle of Khajwa in U.P. in January 1659. His rule over Bihar proved to be as ephemeral as that of his predecessors. He accompanied Shuja on his retreat from Patna. Later, he deserted and went over to Aurangzeb who rewarded him. A number of Firmans to different persons in Bihar and a recorded inscription at Monghyr and also certain monuments at Bhagalpur, including the tomb of his young daughter, are the legacies of Shuja to the province.

AURANGZEB (1658-1707)

Concerning the next governor of Bihar, the first of Aurangzeb's reign,

Dāūd Khan Quraishi, who ruled the province, with a brief interval, from February 1659 to December 1664, there is plenty of material. After the battle of Khajwa, Prince Sultan Muhammad and Mīr Jumla were ordered to pursue Shuja, who had to abandon Monghyr because of the treachery of Raja Bharez of Kharagpur, and eventually fall back on Tanda. Dāūd Khan was ordered to join Mīr Jumla and help him to round up Shuja's forces. Having successfully accomplished his task, he returned to Patna and set out in April 1660 to reconquer Palamau in compliance with Imperial orders.

The chief clan in Palamau in the 17-18th century were the Cheros, a semi-Dravidian tribe. One of their great chiefs Maharāth Chero, had long ago been overthrown by Khawas Khan, Sher Khan's general. The Cheros had gradually been driven out of Saran, Shahabad, Patna and the regions of Hajipur to Palamau, where they had built a strong fort. They had earlier been subdued by Shaista Khan and Itiqad Khan, the previous governors of Bihar; but the Chero Raja was once again hostile and hence the invasion under Dāūd Khan. After some protracted fighting, the stronghold of the Cheros was taken in December 1664. Before returning to Patna, Dāūd Khan obeying Imperial orders, left Mankali Khan as Faujdar of Palamau and in charge of its fort. The services of Dāūd Khan were recognized by the Emperor, who promoted him. There is not much information about him till his transfer to Bengal on the death of Mīr Jumla (March 1663.). Dāūd Khan, however, soon returned to Patna, as Job Charnock wrote from Patna on 3 July 1663, 'Dawet canne [Dāūd Khan] is returned from Dacca.' He was again transferred soon after to Khandesh. His period of governorship in Bihar was successful and vigorous. By conquering Palamau, he extended the limits of the empire to include Chotanagpur. He founded the town Dāūdnagar in the Gaya district, which became the permanent home of his descendants. Two mosques erected by him, one near the Palamau fort bearing an inscription dated 1661, are still extant. A Persian inscription on a stone slab in the Khaja Kalan police station, Patna city, commemorates his régime.

Dāūd Khan's successor in Bihar was Jan Nisar Khan, better known as Lashkar Khan, who continued to rule Bihar till February 1668. European travellers such as Tavernier and Bernier, who visited Patna during the first year of his governorship, give us much valuable information. Another important event during his governorship was the placing of the district of Palamau under the direct charge of

the governor of Bihar. Lashkar Khan was succeeded by Ibrāhim Khan who was in charge of the province from February 1668 to November 1673. It was in his time that Patna experienced a devastating famine. John Marshall, who visited the Guighu Factory and stayed in the province from April 1670 to April 1672, the Dutch traveller, De Graffie, and Thomas Bowery have given graphic descriptions of the horrible scenes they witnessed and heard of during the famine.

Among the immediate successors of Ibrāhim Khan, the *Maasir-i-Ālamgiri* mentions the names of Amir Khan and Tarbiat Khan, the former being replaced by the latter in Nov. 1675. An important event during Amir Khan's brief term of one year was his successful suppression of the rebellion of the Afghans of Shahjahanpur and Kanth Gola, places considered by J. N. Sarkar to be in Bihar. Nothing is known of the brief period of a year and a few months when Tarbiat Khan was in charge of the province. He was sent in April 1677 as commander of Tirhut and Darbhanga and was replaced as governor of Bihar by Prince Azam, the third son of the Emperor. The Prince actually arrived in Patna on 24 July 1677. His tenure of office was also a brief one for he was soon transferred to Bengal.

Prince Azam's place was taken by Saif-ud-dīn Mahmud under the title Saif Khan. He was sent to Bihar in the 21st regnal year or May 1678. He was a capable man, a connoisseur of art and literature, a poet and the author of a book on music. However, nothing of importance seems to have happened during his term of office. He was succeeded by Safi Khan, who ruled over Bihar from the 24th to the 26th regnal years (1680-82). Several Sanads of grants given by Safi Khan are of valuable help in establishing the period of his governorship. The rebellion of Ganga Ram occurred in Bihar during his régime. Another important event during his term was the rebellion of Raja Rudra Singh of Buxar and Bhojpur, successor of Kokalat Sahi. Following the Rudra Singh affair, Hamīd Khan Quraishi, the Faujdār of Shahabad, was removed on the complaint of Safi Khan, the governor, and replaced by Shaikh Ibrāhim, Faujdār of Sasaram. Safi Khan was dismissed for the misappropriation of government money and recalled in 1682. There is no indication anywhere in the standard works as to who immediately succeeded him in Bihar. However, it appears from certain independent evidence that Buzurg Ummed Khan was governor of Bihar in the years (1683-86) immediately following the recall of Safi Khan.

According to the *Maāsir-i-Ālamgiri*, Mukhtar Khan succeeded

Buzurg Ummed Khan. His order of appointment, however, seems to have been cancelled immediately, for the Akhbarat (diary) dated 12 December 1694, mentions the appointment of Fidai Khan, as governor of Bihar. The Akhbarat furnishes us with some information regarding the events of Fidai Khan's régime. It mentions the orders given to the Bihar governor for watching the conduct of the zamindars of Deogarh, punishing the Banjara rebels, and regarding appointments to administrative posts in the province. A much more important event in Bihar at this time was the rising of Kunwar Dhir of Barānaun in the Shahabad district. Despite the remonstrances of his father, who appears to have been a loyal though defaulting zamindar, he stirred up trouble and killed the local officer of Perganā Peero. He is said to have reduced the zamindars of Saran, Champaran and Gaya and his depredations extended up to Allahabad. Shamsher Khan Quraishi, Faujdār of Shahabad and Tirhut, rendered conspicuous service in defeating Dhir and capturing his stronghold. The Emperor was pleased and confirmed him in the Faujdāri of Tirhut and Shahabad. Eventually, according to the Akhbarat dated 10 March 1702, the Emperor ordered him to take charge of the Subahdari of the entire province from Fidai Khan, who was transferred to Allahabad. His was, however, a brief régime, for he was transferred to Oudh in January 1703, and Bihar was given to Prince Azīm-us-Shān as an appendage to the governorship of Bengal which he had held since 1696.

Soon after Murshid Quli Khan was appointed Dewan of Bihar in January 1703. Relations between the conscientious and strict Dewan and the 'lazy' and 'covetous' young Prince, however, became strained. The Prince left Murshidabad, the capital, in a huff and after staying for some time at Rajmahal, eventually reached Patna, early in 1704. The Akhbarat mentions the names of subordinate officials in Bihar who served under Azīm-us-Shān. Patna, during the Prince's short 3-year stay took on a new shape and a new name. The Emperor sanctioned the proposal of his favourite grandson to name Patna, Azīmabad, after himself. The Prince made extensive repairs to the Fort and renovated it thoroughly. Azīm-us-Shān was recalled to Dacca at the end of 1706 at the instigation of his jealous uncle, Prince Azam Shah, who had heard of the vast resources collected at Patna by his nephew. Ajīm-us-Shān left Patna shortly before the death of Aurangzeb (1707) after appointing Surbuland Khan his Naib (Deputy) in Bihar. He received the news of Aurangzeb's death at Karā and at once turned

towards Delhi and Agra. It was largely due to his efforts and the vast resources he had carried away from Bihar and Bengal that Muazzam eventually came out successful in the ensuing fratricidal struggle and ascended the throne under the name Bahadur Shah (1707-12).

4. The Later Moghals

On the accession of Bahadur Shah, the governorship of Allahabad was also conferred upon Azīm-us-Shān in addition to those of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. He appointed Syed Husain Ali Khan his Naib or Deputy in Bihar (1708), while his elder brother, Hasan Alī Khan, was sent to Allahabad. These two brothers, the future king-makers of Delhi, were destined to play a decisive role in the accession of Farrukh Siyar, the son of Azīm-us-Shān. Meanwhile, Murshid Qulī Khan, was called to Delhi while Surbuland Khan was sent from Bihar to Bengal. During the brief interval, Imtiaz Khan Khalis, the grandfather of Mīr Qasim took charge of the province.

The period of Husain Alī Khan's governorship of Bihar (1707-12) was characterized by a strong, efficient and vigorous administration. With the help of able officers he subdued the rebel and defaulting zamindars, specially the Ujjainias of Bhojpur. It was towards the end of his governorship that Farrukh Siyar, came to Bihar, camped at the famous Bagh Jafar Khan and later at Bagh Afzal, and began to plunder the Khalsā lands. During his stay in Bihar, one of his officers somehow managed to occupy the fort of Rohtās. On learning of Bahadur Shah's death Farrukh Siyar immediately proclaimed himself his father's successor. But despite his superiority in men and resources he was defeated by the Machiavellian tactics of Zulfiqar Khan and the dissolute Jahāndar Shah ascended the throne. The arrival of Farrukh Siyar in Bihar with his plundering of Khalsā lands and illegal exactions of money from the English traders had put Husain Alī Khan in a difficult position. On the accession of Jahāndar Khan, Shah Farrukh Siyar declared his own accession in 1124 A.H. and ordered the *Khutba* to be read and issued coins in his own name. The winning over of the Syed brothers to the apparently forlorn cause of Farrukh Siyar by the strong and emotional appeal of his Kashmiri mother Sāhibā Begam, the defeat of Jahāndar Shah, and the accession of Farrukh Siyar (1712) are matters belonging to the general history of India. Nevertheless, the people and resources of Bihar played a decisive role in making the national history of this time.

According to the *Jangnāmā* of Sridhar or Murlidhar, Ghairat Khan, a nephew of the Syed brothers, was appointed governor of Bihar (1712-14) while Ibrāhim Khan was appointed to Bhagalpur. It was during Syed Ghairat's governorship that the English, seeing Murshid Qulī Khan's reluctance in allowing them trade concessions, had decided to send an embassy under Surman to the Imperial court. The journey through Bihar was unsafe, but Ghairat Khan, in compliance with Imperial orders, safely escorted the embassy through his jurisdiction. Mīr Jumla's deputy governorship of Bihar (1714-15) was far too brief and unrelieved by any event of marked success or distinction.

Surbuland Khan was appointed Deputy Governor of the province for a second time in 1715. A strong and vigorous administrator, he was determined to suppress the depredations of Sudhisht Narain son of Dhir. Gathering a large army, he advanced on Shahabad and defeated Sudhisht Narain. Surbuland Khan who was soon after recalled to the Imperial court, was one of those few who viewed with suspicion the activities of the English traders and dealt with them very strictly, in spite of Imperial orders to the contrary. The province suffered by the early transfer of such an able ruler. He was succeeded by Khan Zaman (1718-21), the governor of Oudh. According to Siyar, Nizam-ul-Mulk was offered the governorship of Bihar some time in 1719 by the Syed brothers and he even accepted it. However, he was destined to make history in the south. Meanwhile, a revolutionary change had occurred at Delhi and Khan Zaman continued to govern Bihar.

The palace intrigues of Muhammad Shah and the leaders of the party opposing the Syed brothers finally brought matters to a head. Qutub-ul-Mulk was defeated and captured at the battle of Hasanpura (1720). Syed Nusrat Yar Khan, a relative of the Syed brothers, who had fought against them, was appointed governor of Bihar, as a reward for his fidelity. He probably did not come to Bihar himself but governed through his deputy, Abdul Rahīm Khan. Both he and his deputy were on good terms with the English traders, who are full of praise for them, for both were very accommodating in trade concessions. Nusrat Yar Khan died in 1721 and was succeeded, according to the author of the *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari* (A.D. 1800), by Aqidat Khan. He could not stay for long at Azīmābād, because of his bad health. Marhamat Khan, the previous governor of Burhānpur, also managed the affairs of Bihar for some time. But he probably died

soon after, and his brothers, Hadi Khan and Baqur Khan, continued to govern Bihar for some time after his death.

Nawab Fakhr-ud-Daula was appointed governor of Bihar in 1727. Among the Persian papers of the Divisional Commissioner's office, Patna, there is a Sanad, dated 1733, which refers to a grant of rent-free land to Shah Khalil of Sasaram, during the governorship of Fakhr-ud-Daula. It is evident from this and from other papers that Fakhr-ud-Daula definitely governed Bihar at least from 1727 to 1734. He was recalled because of certain complaints. He was the last independent Moghal governor of Bihar, for after him the governorship of Bihar became an appendage of Bengal.

After the recall of Fakhr-ud-Daula, Prince Mirza Ahmad (the future Ahmad Shah) was appointed governor of Bihar with Nawab Md. Shuja-ud-dīn, as his deputy, but neither of them actually came to Bihar. Shuja-ud-dīn sent a relative of his Alīvardī Khan, in the 15th Juloos (1734) and he came to govern Bihar on his behalf, according to Karam Ali (A.D. 1772). Pending the arrival of Alīvardī Khan, Ghulam Ali and Ahsan-ullah Khan, governed Bihar for short periods.

Alīvardī Khan's governorship was characterized by many momentous developments in Bihar and elsewhere, culminating in Bihar losing its independent status. The comparatively weak government of Fakhr-ud-Daula and the consequent refractoriness of the zamindars as well as the loss of government revenue, threw the province into a state of confusion. The new Nawab gave his special attention to these problems. A past master in political manoeuvering and improvization, he won the loyalty of the Hindus and of the valiant Rohilla chiefs. They provided him with some very good deputies and generals. Among them were Dewan Chintaman Das, Janki Das, Abdul Karīm Rohilla and Mustafā Khan Barech. A series of small expeditions was undertaken against refractory zamindars; the Ujjainias were subdued in 1733, Abdul Karīm defeated the Rajas of Bettiah and Darbhanga, occupied the fort of the former and brought the latter prisoner to Patna. Alīvardī Khan next turned his attention towards Sunder Singh, the rebellious Raja of Tikarī. He marched against the rebel and drove him out of the province. Sunder Singh, however, later returned to cause fresh trouble. He was eventually arrested and condemned to death, but was pardoned through the intervention of Dewan Chintaman, who had interested Alīvardī's wife in the matter. The Raja became a loyal supporter of Alīvardī and his family.

The wandering bands of Banjaras, who were always creating trouble were driven from pillar to post and eventually subdued.

In the meanwhile, revolutionary changes had taken place in the government of Bengal. Shuja-ud-dīn Md. Khan died in 1739 after nominating his son, Sarfarāz Khan, as his successor. Sarfarāz had hardly been at the helm for a year when the machinations of Rai Rayen Alamchand and Hajī Ahmad, turned the latter against the son of his own benefactor and patron. In the ensuing battle of Gharia, April 1740, Sarfarāz Khan was slain and Alīvardī became governor of all the eastern provinces, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

Alīvardī Khan now appointed Haibat Jung, the father of Sirāj-ud-Daula as his deputy in Bihar, and the period of this deputy governorship lasted from 1740 to 1748. The Ujjainias of Shahabad, under the leadership of Noril Singh and Udwant Singh, once again rose in revolt. Haibat Jung himself headed an expedition to Shahabad and subdued them. The Raja of Ramgarh was also subdued and the fort of Chatra occupied. Further progress however, ceased because of the impending Maratha inroads under Raghujī Bhonsle. Haibat Jung was recalled to Bengal by Alīvardī along with his forces. Hidayat Ali Khan deputized for him in Bihar during his absence. In the meantime, Safdar Jung, the Nawab of Oudh, was also ordered by the Emperor, in response to Alīvardī's appeal for help, to advance into Bihar and assist him. The two, however, fell out among themselves through Safdar Jung's arrogance and covetousness. The third Maratha Peshwa, Bālājī Bājī Rao, was also sent by the Emperor. to Alīvardī's aid. The whirlwind Maratha force passed through the southern districts of Bihar, by-passing Patna. Haibat Jung had in the meantime hastened back to Bihar, renovated the fort and improved the city's defences.

The rebellion of Mustafa Khan Barech occurred at about this time. Disappointed in his hopes and resenting Alīvardī's broken promises, he came over to Bihar determined to win it by force. He was joined by the discontented Ujjainias, for whose cause Roshan Khan Tarhi had been wrongly killed. Alīvardī also marched to Bihar to reinforce his nephew but had soon to return to Bengal to deal with a fresh Maratha invasion under Janojī Bhonsle. Haibat Jung boldly faced the rebels. After successive defeats, Mustafa Khan was eventually killed in battle. The Marathas, who had answered Mustafa Khan's call for help, once again pillaged Bihar but spared Patna. Mustafa Khan's revolt was followed by the defection of the Darbhanga Rohillas

the chief among whom were Shamsher Khan and Sardar Khan. They had been living in retirement at Darbhanga since their disbandment by Alīvardī. They had neither forgotten nor forgiven the murder of Roshan Khan and the raw deal they had received from Alīvardī. Haibat Jung's invitation to them came as a godsend to fulfil their designs, and finally (on 23rd Muharram 1161, January 1748) Murad Sher Khan, the nephew of Shamsher Khan, treacherously attacked and killed Haibat Jung.

Haibat Jung was a successful governor of this province. His wise and successful measures for winning over the Hindu and Muslim chiefs of the province, among whom Raja Sunder of Tikarī, Kamgar Khan and Namdar Khan, the famous Mayi Chiefs of the Gaya area, were the most prominent, were notable. The vigorous measures he adopted to subdue rebels restored to the province the much sought-after peace and plenty. His tragic end in the prime of life spelt the doom of the house of Alīvardī.

The death of the promising member of Haibat Jung's family was a grievous blow to the ageing Nawab of Bengal. But the veteran, once again rising to the occasion, marched from Bengal, defeated the rebel Afghans and returned to Murshidabad with the bereaved family of Haibat Jung. The Nizāmat of Bihar was assigned to Siraj-ud-Daula with Raja Janki Ram who governed Bihar for four years (1748-52) as his deputy. It was at his instance that the once magnificent mausoleum of Haibat Jung was erected in the Mohalla Begumpore, of Patna city, where it still stands. At the time of his death (1752) he recommended his Diwan, Ram Narayan, for the deputy governorship of the province. The twelve years of Raja Ram Narayan's deputy governorship of the province (1752-64) witnessed some of the most striking events and fateful developments in the history of the province, and of the country. The Raja, poetically surnamed Mauzum, was an eminent man of letters and a distinguished Persian poet. He was also the favourite disciple of the celebrated Irāni poet, Shaikh Alī Hazin.

The mid-eighteenth century in Indian history is characterized by the decay and disintegration of the mighty Moghal empire which consequently generated forces of lawlessness and disorder. Bihar was no exception to the refractoriness and lawlessness prevailing all over the country.

The strained relations between the turbulent zamindars of the province and the new Deputy, take up the early years of his régime.

The Bhojpuria Rajputs of Shahabad, Sunder Singh of Tikarī, Kamgar Khan of Narhat Samai, and Bishun Singh of Siris Khutumba, were conspicuous figures in this period. Their attempts at encroachment and aggrandizement harassed the government. Raja Ram Narayan was fully alive to the problem from the very outset of his régime. They were all subdued and won over by a combined show of force and friendship. In fact, the most remarkable feature of Raja Ram Narayan's political career was the ability and wisdom he showed in settling the affairs of the province with great care and without much bloodshed.

The death of Alīvardī was followed by important developments in Bengal which culminated in the fateful battle of Plassey (1757) and the overthrow of his deputy. Although he was aware of the uncertain temper and the natural limitations of the new young Nawab of Bengal and refers to this 'false and absurd action', he remained loyal and faithful to him and rendered him important military help in his fight with his cousin, Shaukat Jung, the ambitious and rude governor of Purnea. A study of the contemporary letters of the Raja clearly establish that he was kept in the dark about the real nature of the impending revolution in Bengal by the chief conspirators, including his friends Durlabh Ram and the Seths. During the four months preceding the battle of Plassey, the Raja was engaged with the Mayi menace and was out of Patna. When he heard of the death of Siraj-ud-Daula, he wept and recited the following couplet:

> Ghazaalan tum to waqif ho kaho Majnu ke marne ki Diwana mar gaya akhir ko wirana pe kiya guzri?
>
> (Oh! Gazallers (Gazal writers), you surely are in the know of things; tell us of the death of Majnu. The disappointed and distracted lover died, but how did the desolate land fare?)

Despite his loyalty to the young Nawab, the Raja failed to rise to the occasion and acquiesced in the Bengal revolution. He hastened to congratulate the new Nawab. The acknowledgement was however half-hearted and grudging, for Mīr Jafar was bent upon displacing him in favour of his brother. But Clive's support for the Raja and the Nawab, compelled Mīr Jafar to be contented with appointing the Nawab's son, Mīrān, Nāzim of Bihar and allowing Ram Narayan to continue as Deputy. The Raja also managed to evade the question of submitting accounts of the revenue of the province and only offered seven lakhs as dues. The Nawab returned to Bengal with Clive in 1758.

More secure of his position, the Raja turned his attention once again to the restoration of peace and order in the province and to the subjugation of the refractory zamindars. Bishun Singh of Siris Kutumba was subdued and agreed to send his son, Narayan Singh, to Patna as hostage.

Towards the end of the year, the Raja was faced with an unexpected danger. Prince Ali Gauhar, fearing assassination at the hands of the unscrupulous wazir, Ghāzī-ud-dīn Imād-ul-Mulk, escaped from Delhi to Oudh, from where, accompanied by Muhammad Qulī Khan, the governor of Allahabad, he set out for the conquest of the outlying provinces of Bihar. Sunder Singh, Pahalwan Singh, Balwant Singh of Banaras and Kamgar Khan at once took up his cause. The Prince along with Md. Qulī Khan camped at Phulwari. Raja Ram Narayan was in a fix. The English army from Bengal had yet to arrive to help him. Clive and the Raja then proceeded to Shahabad to punish the local zamindars, including Udwant Singh, who had supported the cause of Ali Gauhar. During his stay there, Clive raised a battalion of Shahabad sepoys. In order to gain time, he somehow came before the Prince but divining his real intentions, Clive retreated to the fort and prepared for a siege. The Prince, however, had to abandon the siege after about a week, because of the sudden return of Md. Qulī Khan to Chunar and Allahabad which the ambitious Oudh Nawab, had treacherously occupied in his absence. In the meantime, Mīrān, son of Mīr Jafar, along with Clive, also arrived at Patna, and the Prince fled towards Chatarpur in the Bundelkhand region. However, the zamindars of Bihar soon became disgusted with Mīrān's conduct. Sunder Singh and others opened negotiations with the Prince through Kamgar Khan.

At about this time, the old Emperor, Alamgir II, was murdered (on the 10th Rabi I, 1173-1759) at the instance of the notorious wazir Imād-ul-Mulk, and the Prince declared himself Emperor under the title of Shah Alam II, at Ghatowli in the following Jamid I. Kamgar Khan, Asalat Khan and Diller Khan met the new Emperor and induced him to invade Bihar. Ram Narayan, who was this time encamped on the river Dehwa, was defeated and wounded. The English contingent under Captain Cochrane, supporting Ram Narayan, was also defeated. Things had thus reached a crisis when the Prince heard of the approach of another English army which had set out from Murshidabad under Clive and Mīrān, on hearing

of the Prince's move on Bihar, but had been held up on the way to deal with the rebellious Purnea governor, Khadīm Husain. This made Kamgar Khan withdraw with the Prince to Bihar. He subsequently tried to make a surprise march on Murshidabad, the capital. Mīrān and Clive, however, followed him and informed Mīr Jafar, of the impending move. He, too, left his capital to oppose the Prince. Hemmed in on all sides, Kamgar Khan beat a hasty retreat with the Emperor, returned to Patna and besieged it again. Unaware of the dire straits the besieged garrison were in, they did not force the siege too vigorously. The fort, in fact, was on the verge of surrender when Captain Knox, marching with incredible speed and covering 300 miles in thirteen days, brought the much-needed relief to Patna. Kamgar Khan and the Prince once again withdrew towards Bihar and began collecting revenue there. Meanwhile Khadīm Hussain, the governor of Purnea, arrived at Hajipur with a large army and affairs once again took a critical turn for the English. However, Captain Knox along with Shitab Rai crossed the river and with a comparatively small force defeated Khadīm Hussain who fled to Bettiah. The province of Bihar was then rendered safe for the English.

Mīr Jafar was removed from the 'Masnad' in 1760 and Mīr Qasim, his son-in-law, appointed in his place by the British.

Mīr Qasim now turned his attention to the Raja who had till then evaded submitting an account of the revenue of the province. In Mīr Qasim he faced an astute and businesslike master who could not be easily gulled. The English were also pressing the new Nawab for their dues. He informed them that unless he settled accounts with the Raja, who was charged with the misappropriation of huge amounts, he could not pay them. Clive, the staunchest supporter of the Raja was away in England at the time. Vansittart urged the Raja to clear his accounts. When he failed to do so, Vansittart withdrew the protective police post from his residence, and left him at the mercy of the Nawab. The Raja and his principal staff were arrested and imprisoned in the Fort (1760) and Raj Ballabh the previous Diwan of Mīrān, was appointed in his place. The Raja was later transferred to Monghyr fort, after the battle of Udhua-Nala, and before abandoning the fort of Monghyr in 1763 Mīr Qasim, in a vindictive and desperate mood, ordered Raja Ram Narayan to be drowned in the Ganges along with several other important state prisoners. Thus ended the career of Raja Ram Narayan 'Mauzun',

the poet-politician, one of the important personalities in this period of Bihar's history.

B. Administration, Central, Provincial and Rural (1526-1756)

The establishment of the first Moghal Empire in India did not imply any administrative change in Bihar. The broad outlines of administration evolved under the Sultans of the Turko-Afghan period remained practically unaltered under Babar and Humayun. The revenue list in Babar's *Memoirs* shows that he took the records and practice of the Afghan government as the basis of his administration. Like the Sultans of Delhi, Babar also distributed the revenue of the empire among the officers, reserving a good proportion as khālsā or crown lands. Muhammad Zamān Mīrzā was given the Bihar revenue but a revenue of Rs 1,250,00,00 was reserved as khālsā. Conforming to the policy of the Turkish Sultans of Delhi, Babar appointed Muhammad Zamān viceroy of Bihar and Murshid Irāqi its Diwan. Again there were khālsā, jāgīr, and sayurghal lands as well as lands under the direct management of rāis or Rajas. The territorial divisions, the administrative units and the methods of revenue collection remained the same as before, Babar simply taking over the government. Each province, each district, and every village was governed in ordinary matters according to local custom.

The reorganization of the administrative machinery and policy of reorientation was the work of Farid of Sasaram in Bihar, who later became the famous Sher Shah, Emperor of Hindustan. The historical importance of his administrative measures, especially in revenue matters, lay in the fact that these were first tried by him in Bihar and were later adopted by Akbar.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Under the Afghans, to whom the idea of a Sultan as overlord was repugnant, the Sultan was only a *primus inter pares*. The position of the provincial and local administrators in such a system was bound to be very strong and the control of the central government extremely loose.

On the other hand, the concept of sovereignty under the Moghal rulers was one of absolutism, based on the 'divine right' theory. The king was the source of all power in the State, but in actual operation there were certain limitations. The empire was very extensive and

communication poor and slow. The despotism of the Moghal sovereign therefore, depended upon the personal equation. To overcome these practical obstacles, the Moghal Emperor devised a series of checks and balances to control the provincial administration, viz., (*a*) by the frequent transfer of governors, ministers and officers; (*b*) by the introduction of an effective espionage system (wāqa-i-navis), including secret reporters (sawanih nigar and harkarah), and by having the Bakhshī (Paymaster of the Forces) to report important matters to the Emperor; (*c*) by an administrative dyarchy, making the governor and the diwan mutually independent in the discharge of their duties; (*d*) by frequent imperial tours, and by showing concern for the peasants; and (*e*) by requiring Imperial sanction for inflicting the death penalty.

RELATION BETWEEN THE CENTRAL AND PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATIONS

Sher Shah tried to build up from below. The perganā was the lowest administrative unit in Sher Shah's system where one shiqdār, one amīn, one treasurer (fotahdār), and two karkūns (writers, one in Hindi and another in Persian) were appointed, the first two officers being equal in status. The shiqdār was entrusted with police duties while the amīn's duty was to assess and collect the revenue. The perganā consisted of several villages. The next higher units were the sarkar, governed by two officials, one military and the other civilian, known as Shiqdār-i-Shiqdārān (Chief Shiqdār) and Munsif-i-Munsifān (Chief Munsif) respectively. The Chief Shiqdār had to keep the people obedient to authority and he therefore may be regarded as the precursor of the faujdār in the provincial sub-divisions under the Moghals. The Chief Munsif had to discharge some of the diwan's duties but the revenue affairs of the perganā were not fully concentrated in his office, there being a direct relation between the perganā officials and the Imperial Secretariat. His chief task was to watch over the conduct of the perganā officials to prevent them from oppressing or injuring the people or embezzling the Imperial revenue. The Chief Munsif acted as a circuit judge trying civil suits. The officials in the perganā and the sarkar were transferred every two or three years. The police system of Sher Shah was simple but effective. The Chief Shiqdār was the guardian of the peace in the sarkar and his subordinates exercised the same function in the perganās. In cases of undetected or untraced theft, highway robbery and murder, the muqaddam (headman) of the village was personally

responsible on the principle that theft, highway robbery and other such offences could take place only with his connivance. The police system of Sher Shah, according to all contemporary writers, pro-Afghan and pro-Moghal, was efficient, worked well and led to the disappearance of theft and robbery from the kingdom.

Under the Moghals, the higher administrative machinery in Bihar was a miniature copy of that at the centre. The governor was the representative of the Emperor in the province while the various departmental heads (the diwan, the bakhshi, the qāzī, the sadr, and the muhtasib) were subordinate to their corresponding imperial officers, with the Emperor as the final arbiter.

The governor under Akbar was styled the Sipāh Sālār (the Nāzim, popularly the Subahdār and later only the Subah. Next to him in official rank, though not in any way subordinate to him, was the Diwan. They shared between them the responsibility of running the whole administrative machinery. The Sipāh Sālār was responsible for executive administration, defence, criminal justice, and general supervision. The Diwan was responsible for revenue administration and civil justice, besides supervision of the department of the Sadr. But though the Diwan was practically independent of the governor's authority, he was not his equal in status or rank. Subah Bihar was regarded as an important province and for this reason persons of royal blood and statesmen of high rank served as viceroys. Transfers of governors were generally determined by the exigencies of administration. Subordinate appointments in the executive branches of the province were made by the Nāzim-i-Subah, while those in the diwani department were made by the Diwan.

Next to the Diwan, the most important officers were the Sadr and the Q̤āzī, the heads of the judicial and religious departments, the two offices often being combined under the Moghals. In the Intelligence department, the office of the provincial bakhshi was generally combined with that of the political remembrancer (wāqa-i-nigar). Besides the public intelligence department, there was the secret service in which a new set of reporters were appointed known as sawanih navis or khufia navis, who were to attend secretly all public places and offices and confidentially report matters to the Imperial government. When this office ceased to be secret, another secret service called the harkarahs was created; these officers kept the Nāzim informed of affairs in the province and reported to the Emperor.

Under the Moghals, Bihar Subah was divided into a number of sarkars and each sarkar further into a number of perganās. There were seven sarkars (Bihar, Monghyr, Tirhut, Rohtas, Hajipur, Saran and Champaran) and 200 perganās in Bihar under Akbar (*c.* 1582). Under Aurangzeb (*c.* 1685) the number of sarkars increased to eight with the division of the Sarkar Rohtas into the Sarkar Rohtas and the Sarkar Shahabad Bhojpur, while the number of perganās increased to 246. The Faujdār, the administrative head of the sarkar and the main executive officer in the perganā, was the principal assistant of the governor. He exercised civil, police and military jurisdiction over the sarkar, combining the functions of the modern District Magistrate (but not the Collector), Superintendent of Police and Military Commandant. In revenue matters the Faujdār had an indirect function to perform to assist the Amalguzar, the chief revenue officer, to realize revenue from contumacious cultivators. But in army and police matters the Faujdār had a direct role to play in keeping the local militia well equipped and in maintaining peace. There was a network of thanas or outposts covering the perganās, within the faujdāri. The Kotwāl was essentially an urban officer, being chief of the city police and in charge of the entire town administration. He was magistrate, prefect of police and municipal officer, all rolled into one. His duties were as follows; (*i*) the watch and ward of the town, (*ii*) the performance of magisterial or judicial duties, (*iii*) the censoring of public morals, (*iv*) the control of illegal taxation and currency, (*v*) the control of markets and prices, (*vi*) the care and disposal of heirless property, (*vii*) the control of ferry services and tolls, (*viii*) the control of social and religious practices, and (*ix*) the regulation of animal slaughter and of cemeteries. The Kotwāl of Patna, the chief city of Bihar, had his office in Alamganj (Patna) at the time of Jahangir. The Muhtasib (Censor of Public Morals) was an important police official who was the overseer of markets and morals.

In the perganā, however, the offices of the faujdār and kotwāl were combined in the shiqdār who represented the government and was in charge of the police as well as of criminal justice. Civil justice and revenue administration were in the hands of the perganā qāzī and the amil respectively. The perganā was a political unit while the mahal was a revenue or fiscal unit. Sometimes the perganās were grouped into chaklas. In each chakla there was an amīn and a faujdār with the kroris (collectors) of the mahals as subordinates.

LAW, JUSTICE AND JAILS

Under the Sūrs, considerable advance was made in judicial organzation and also in its spirit. Sher Shah was a great lover of justice and possessed the spirit of a legislator more than any one else before Akbar. He introduced a new spirit into the administration of justice and it is said that the judicial administration of the Sūrs was modern while that of the Moghals was medieval. Under Sher Shah, talented men were appointed judges while civil judges were not necessarily ulemas (theologians). Sher Shah made laws which he himself observed and made others observe. His son, Islām, issued a code of regulations with detailed instructions to do away with the interference of the Qāzī and the Mufti, who were often called upon to decide whether a case was religious or not.

In religious and social matters, Hindus were governed by their own laws, while Muslims were governed by Islāmic laws. In other cases, Hindus and Muslims alike were subject to the Islāmic law. This principle is supported by the *Fatwah-i-Alamgiri*. In addition, the village panchāyats, following their tradition, decided all village disputes, except cases of serious crime, such as murder or robbery.

Patna, the capital of Bihar, had its own provincial Qāzī, appointed by the Imperial Qāzī. A Qāzī was posted at every large town and at the seat of a Sarkar. Every city and even large villages had a local Qāzī who was appointed by the Chief Qāzī of the province. In every perganā headquarters there was a Qāzī. He tried criminal suits according to Muslim law, assisted by the Mufti who consulted the old Arabic law books and jurisprudence and stated the law on the case, the Qāzī passing judgement. The Sadr was a judge and supervisor of religious endowments and charitable grants of land. There were also separate Qāzīs for the army with the name Qāzī-i-askar.

We get an account of the working of the judiciary on the evidence of the Bhagalpur Collectorate records, as operating in Bhagalpur towards the end of the 18th century, immediately prior to the establishment of the Company's Courts. Bhagalpur (a perganā in the Sarkar of Monghyr) had a zila Qāzī who held office through the sanad of a provincial Qāzī, there being at that time three Qāzīs in the province of Bihar, one senior and two junior. In those days Rajmahal formed a separate zila and had a Qāzī of its own, appointed by the Chief Qāzī of the province. The district Qāzī had the power to appoint his own assistants in important centres, e.g. Bhagalpur zila had four naib Qāzīs for four places, Bhagalpur, Colgong,

Bihpur and Gogri. Each of these naib Qāzīs appointed their own subordinate Qāzīs. The naib Qāzī of Bhagalpur had five sub-Qāzīs under him at different places, while each of the naib Qāzīs of Colgong, Bihpur and Gogri had three sub-Qāzīs stationed in different places. Thus in a single district, there were as many as nineteen Qāzīs conducting the judicial administration and performing certain religious duties such as marriage and funeral rites.

There were two classes of jails, one meant for men of high rank, government officials and princes; the other for criminals of ordinary status. Nobles condemned to life imprisonment were sent to Rohtas.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

Land was the main source of revenue. In fully settled areas, revenue was raised directly from land. If the country however, remained under its native ruler or was not completely subdued, revenue was drawn by the Emperor in the shape of tribute. An idea may be formed from the following figures given in Babar's *Memoirs* :—

Area		*Tankahs* (silver coin $\frac{1}{16}$ of a rupee)
Bihar (tribute from Jalāl Khan Lohani)		40,560,000
Saran ..	..	11,018,679
Champaran (Chiparan)	..	19,086,609
Tirhut (tribute of the Tirhut Raja) ..	..	525,000

As shiqdār of his father's jāgīrs in Bihar, Farid found there a system more or less similar to that of the early Turks. The shiqdār and the muqaddam (village headman), manipulated accounts. The peasants also suffered at the hands of the unruly soldiers of military jāgīrs. Farid was a believer in the welfare of the peasants and, like the French Physiocrats, regarded agriculture as the only source of wealth. He threatened the soldiers, muqaddams and patwāris with dire consequences if they were found guilty of oppression. The peasants were given the option of paying rent in cash or kind. Farid made direct settlements with the rayats, taking written kabuliyats or agreements from them and in return giving them pattas (title deeds).

As Emperor, Sher Shah applied the principles tested in his father's jāgīrs and insisted upon land measurement. It was measured in bighas under the supervision of the amān by means of ropes (replaced by bamboo under Akbar). The State's share was one-third

of the average produce. Sher Shah and his son, Islām Shah, discouraged the system of division of crops. The revenue officers were instructed to be lenient in assessing, but strict in collecting. Sher Shah restricted the practice of granting jāgīrs to soldiers in lieu of pay, though he himself gave jāgīrs to his men in Rohtas, Bengal, and elsewhere. Sher Shah also collected grain from each bigha and stored it in local granaries for use in time of famine.

Under the Moghals, Bihar had its own provincial diwan in charge of the financial administration. At first he was under the supervision of the governor, but Akbar made him directly responsible to the Imperial diwan. This led to an increase in the diwans' independence, which ultimately made them dangerous and powerful under the feeble successors of Aurangzeb. The chief revenue officer in the sarkar was the amalguzār or the āmil (corresponding to the modern Collector), assisted by a large staff headed by the bitikchi. The bitikchi was the secretary of the revenue department in the sarkar and was responsible for preparing the necessary papers and records on the basis of which assessment and collection was carried out by the āmil. In the perganā, the shiqdār, as the representative of the faujdār, rendered police assistance to the āmil in the collection of revenue. The krori was a collector of one crore of dams (Rs 2,50,000) and this office was evolved for the first time under Akbar. Later the title meant simply a collector of state dues.

The distinctive features of Akbar's revenue system, known as the zabti (or regulation) system, were the classification and measurement of land and the direct settlements with the rayats. The State demand was one-third of the average produce. So far as the assessment in Bihar is concerned, the zabti system is stated to have prevailed in 138 of the 200 perganās in Bihar towards the close of Akbar's reign. Besides land revenue, there were other sources of revenue in a province, viz. duties on internal transit, duties on the various markets in large towns, income from public works such as gardens, and octroi.

There are several landmarks in the revenue history of Bihar. The first is the revenue settlement made in Hindustan by Todar Mall, in 1582, the standard revenue being 55,47,984 rupees. At that time the whole sarkar of Monghyr together with the hill and forest regions of modern Chotanagpur, of the sarkars of Bihar, Rohtas and Tirhut were mostly unsubdued and unexplored. The second took place in 1685 which raised the standard revenue to 85,15,683 rupees. The third took place in 1750, under the administration of Alīvardī

Khan and Amildary of Janakiram, with a rent-roll of 95,56,098 rupees. A fourth settlement virtually took place on the acquisition of the Diwani in 1765 under Muhammad Reza Khan, chiefly as a result of the annexation of the district of Bettiah (in the sarkar of Champaran).

MILITARY ADMINISTRATION

Sher Shah established a direct relationship between the Emperor and the common soldier. He enforced the practice of the dāgh (branding of horses and registration of men) to prevent fraudulent musters, i.e. corruption by officers keeping the scheduled quota of contingents. The army was divided into two, the royal army maintained by the king, and the contingents supplied by the jāgīrdārs. There were many important army stations in the empire under faujdārs. In Bihar there were 10,000 matchlockmen at Rohtas under Ikhtiyār Khan Panni. The infantry and matchlockmen (bandukchih) in Sher Shah's army were Hindus, the ancestors of the Baksarias (matchlockmen of Buxar) who served the Moghals and whose descendants are known as Bhojpuris.

Under the Moghals there were three classes of military forces in Bihar: (*i*) the contingents maintained by high officials from the governor downwards according to rank (mansab); (*ii*) the contingents of minor zamindars which were attached to the governor; (*iii*) the provincial forces consisting of cavalry, infantry and other armed men, these being as follows in Bihar Subah at the time of Akbar: in Bihar sarkar, 2,115 cavalry and 67,350 infantry; in Monghyr sarkar, 2,150 cavalry and 50,000 infantry; sarkar Champaran, 700 cavalry and 30,000 infantry; in sarkar Saran, 1,000 cavalry and 50,000 infantry; in sarkar Tirhut, 700 cavalry and 80,000 infantry; in sarkar Rohtas, 4,550 cavalry and 162,000 infantry. These figures represented in general the expected estimates of militia which each sarkar might raise. As a source of supply of cavalry and infantry, Bihar occupied the tenth and fourth positions respectively among the provinces of the empire.

RURAL ADMINISTRATION

The lowest unit of administration in Bihar, as elsewhere, was the perganā, consisting of several villages and not of only one village. The attitude of the Moghal emperors towards village administration was one of non-interference, due either to an official dislike of

village life, or an indifference to its interests, or again to a prudent acceptance of the institutions of the ancient autonomous village community.

The Moghals did not directly provide for the policing of rural areas, but maintained a system of local responsibility for local crimes, with the village headman and his subordinate watchmen (chaukidārs, pasban, dosadh) responsible for the prevention and detection of crimes in villages. The corporate body of the villagers were bound to make good any loss of property of their own or of travellers resulting from crimes committed within the village boundaries, except where they could trace the offenders and recover the stolen goods or shift the responsibility on to a neighbouring village. As servants of the village community (and not of the State), the chaukidārs were maintained by the villagers. The local zamindars (and later the ghatwals also) had to prevent robbery and kindred crimes within their respective jurisdictions.

Some contact was kept by the provincial government of Bihar with the villages through tours of governors and subdivisional faujdārs, subordinate revenue officials realizing collections direct from peasants' and zamindars' visits to the governor's court. But the contact was not very intimate and as long as the villagers paid the land revenue and did not break the peace they were let alone by the government.

The headman of the village had several designations: muqaddam, representing the state; mandal or gumashta, a servant of the zamindar; jeth rayat, the leader of the village people when a Brāhmaṇa or Rajput, and mahta, when a Koeri or Kurmi. Generally speaking, the village headman had a dual role to play, as the representative of the villagers before the government and vice versa. He superintended all matters relating to the village public life, administrative, economic and social, while the patwāri was the accountant.

There were sectional and caste panchāyats as well as panchāyats of the whole village including all sections of the people. Perhaps the whole community met only to dispose of some special business and disputes of various kinds, normal routine duties being carried on through a number of sub-committees. The justice of the village panchāyats was cheap and quick, while an intimate knowledge of the facts by the village elders and a fear of public opinion generally ensured fairness.

Intimately connected with the system of panchāyats was the institution of the bhāiāri or brotherhood. It signified the assembling of

members of any caste for some special reasons, such as to perform religious ceremonies or to revoke social or caste ostracisms inflicted by the panchāyat. The panchāyat system and the custom of bhāiāri were, however, not the only traces of pre-Moghal village administration in the districts of Bihar. In Saran, there still survived the five grades of village councils among the so-called lower orders, the Koeris, Kahars, Telis, and Hajams: (*a*) gawān, i.e. the lowest court with members chosen from two or more conterminous villages; (*b*) jawar, literally 'the neighbour', a council of a tract of country consisting of villages surrounding the family residence of some recognized person; (*c*) baisi, a court consisting of 22 panchāyats; (*d*) panchmahāl with a still larger jurisdiction; and (*e*) chawrasi, the highest court of appeal —supreme over all with its jurisdiction extending over several districts. Every panchāyat had a sardār or headman, called manjan, whose office was hereditary.



XVI

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND CULTURE

A.D. 1526-1707

A. Religion

Hinduism

AS before, religion governed the life of the bulk of Indians in the Medieval period. Bihar was no exception. By this time, Jainism and Buddhism had almost disappeared as effective faiths in Bihar, the region of their birth. The religious life of the Hindus and Muslims in the Sultanate period has already been dealt with. The present chapter is intended to acquaint the readers with the developments of such formative forces as Bhakti and other religious ideals.

As for the source material, a variety of the original sources, such as the religious literature of the Mithilā scholars and the Malfuzats of the Shattari Sufi saints of the Moghal period, which have hitherto remained untapped, have been consulted. The travel accounts of various Europeans and particularly the book of John Marshall and of the Catholic lady B. Meer Hasan Ali have been drawn upon. Some published articles in research journals have also been utilized.

Reference has been made already to the wave of theistic reformation that swept over Northern India in the early years of the Muslim period. 'In the early middle ages,' says Carpenter, 'a remarkable sect of the Bhagwatas came into view (about 1100) with important scriptures of their own, who developed what was known as the Bhakti Mārga or the path of devotion over against the ritualistic cults known as the Karma Mārga or the path of work (rituals), and Jnān Mārga or the path of knowledge.

Since the days of Śaṅkarāchārya (ninth century), the south had given birth to great Hindu Acharyas who supplied Hinduism with a

sound philosophical and metaphysical basis. In spite of their differences, they succeeded in holding the intelligentsia and they also initiated the great Bhakti cult. Rāmānuja (1079-1137), Madhwa (13th century), Nimbārka and Vallabha (1479-1531), were all Brāhmaṇas from the south. Jayadeva, the author of *Gita Govinda*, Chaitanya (1485-1533) and other great leaders of the Bhakti Mārga were the spiritual descendants of these Acharyas. Rāmānand, another very great Bhakta was the follower of Rāmānuja and came about three hundred years after him. Like other great Bhakti Mārgis, Rāmānand popularized and liberalized Hinduism. Caste was regarded only as a social distinction and not as an impediment to spiritual progress. He laid greater emphasis on freedom in the matter of food and acknowledged that even Śūdras, outcasts and women, could attain salvation. Among his twelve disciples was a Muslim weaver (Kabir), a cobbler (Rai Das), a barber (Sena), a Jāt, and at least one woman. The Rāmānandi Vairāgis (ascetics) are found in large numbers in North India, including Bihar. Rai Das is said to have belonged to Arrah.

The teachings of Rāmānand led to the creation of two distinct schools. One was represented by Nabha Das and Tulsi Das, contemporaries of Akbar and respective authors of *Bhakta Mālā* and the immortal Rāmāyaṇa, *Rām-Charita-Mānas*, (lake of the deeds of Rama). They safeguarded the authority of the Vedas and did not break with the past socially or religiously. They enriched Hinduism by popularizing the cult of Rama and by elevating the moral level of the people. The other and no less important school followed the lead of Kabir, Rai Das, Nanak, Dadu and other mystics who preached strict monotheism and refused to acknowledge gods and demi-gods. They denounced the caste system and rituals as absurd and futile, and attempted to bridge the gulf between Hinduism and Islam by synthesizing the best elements of both. Kabir's following was small but his influence has been widespread. Wilson enumerates, besides the important sect of Kabirpanthis, twelve sects which, with many more, owed their origin to him. The Kabirpanthis have their Math in Saran. The Daryapanthis, followers of Darya Saheb, an eighteenth-century Ujjainia poet-ascetic of Shahabad, may also be said to have been inspired by the teachings of Kabir.

The popularity of Rath Jatra in some parts of Bihar, of kirtan songs in the Bhagalpur district, and of the Vishṇupād temple at Gaya, indicate the abiding influence of Vaishṇavism in Bihar. Srīnāth,

the Brāhmaṇa Pandit of John Marshall, told him in 1670-71 about the virtues of the pilgrimage to 'Jagannath' of Puri. But if we are to judge by the number of ancient temples, we may say that Bihar was more Śaivite than Vaishṇavite. The hoary temple of Deogarh, the temple at Bikatpur in the Patna district, the Math at Gaya, the temple at Bazidpur in the Darbhanga district, and the Kuleśwar and Singheśwar temples are all Śaivite. Dr Spooner gave a long list of 'Tirhut types of temples', most of which were dedicated to Hara Mahadeva. Nevertheless we should not hastily infer that Śaivism was the prevailing form of the Hindu religion in Bihar. In fact, South Bihar has been more Vaishṇava than Śaiva and the reasons why Vaishṇava temples are fewer are as follows: (*i*) if any harm occurs to the presiding deity in a Vishṇu temple, it requires a far more elaborate ceremony to replace it, than in the case of Śiva; (*ii*) Śiva temples are accessible to all, but women and Śūdras are forbidden to perform worship in Vaishṇava temples; (*iii*) worship in Śaiva temples is simpler, sometimes even mere water is enough; Śiva is aśutosh (easily pleased). But many things, such as grain, sandal, flour and so on, are needed in Vaishṇava temples; (*iv*) Śiva was the god of all classes of people and of the Smārta Brāhmaṇas who did not hesitate to take meat and fish; (*v*) and there was the close connexion of Śaivism with Śāktism.

It would be more correct to say that the great mass of Hindus in Medieval Bihar were not dogmatic about their religion or denomination. Though there were distinct systems such as Śaivism, Vaishṇavism, and Śāktism, they were interchangeable and often complementary. The very name Hari-Har Kshetra given to the great Sonepur temple involves joint worship of Vishṇu and Śiva.

There are other older evidences of adherence of the people to more than one manifestation of God. Govind, the author *Pīyūsh Dhārā* (1603), invokes Ganesh and Sūrya. The Mithilā scholar Mahesh Thākur began his still unpublished manuscript *Tithi Tattva Chintāmaṇi* in the name of Kālikā (Durgā), Mukunda (Kṛishṇa), Lakshmī and Bāni. Another of his works, *Day Sār*, begins with the invocation to 'Govind Swarup Ram' (i.e. Ram in the form of Govind). That the Mithilā scholar Keśava Miśra of the sixteenth century owed allegiance to Śakti, Śiva and Vishṇu, can be inferred from the invocation in his work *Sāṅkhya Parimān* to Radha and Kṛishṇa, to Kashi Biśveśwar, Dand Pāni, Gangā, Bhawani and Vighnesh (Ganesh). In his Tāṅtric work *Tārā Bhakti Sudhārnava*,

Nar Singh Thākur (sixteenth century), first bows to Vishṇu and then to Pārvati and Śiva. The number of works on the Tantra produced by the old Maithil scholars is fairly large and the writers have been predominantly Śāktas or Śaivas. They offer their daily worship to the Panch Devatās: Sūrya, Ganapati or Ganesh, Durgā Devi, Agni and Śiva. The Kul-Devatās (family goddesses) worshipped through successive generations consist of Tripurā, Kālikā, Durgā, Bhawani and Girijā. This multiplicity is due to the belief that all Devatās are but the manifestations in different aspects of the One Supreme Spirit. Each devotee is free to choose his Isṭa Devatā, (chosen deity), for special worship and contemplation, while he continues his allegiance to other deities as manifestations.

Śāktism, one of the most important and widespread movements within Hinduism, was closely linked with Śaivism and has produced a considerable literature. It had two orders, Dakshināchār (right-handed) and Vāmāchār (left-handed). One was philosophic and devotional, the other, though based on the same foundations, had some terrible and revolting features, the source of which was probably the 'Bhoot Chapter' of the Kālikā Purāṇ (14th century). The chief characteristics of Śāktism are: the Mother Goddess is considered as 'Śakti', power, the potency of Śiva who is the counterpart. The latter is static and transcendent while the former is active and immanent, and protector as well as destroyer. The highest attainment consists in partaking of the joy of life as the Mother's devotee, but in being free from any attachment to senses or their objects. The Devi (Durgā) sits on the left hand of the Lord and has her own temples and shrines. The Tantras, which are the literature of Śāktas, are sixty-four in number and are divided into three groups. Most of them relate to the technique of worship, psychic subjects and occult phenomena. The main aim is sublimation through ritual and symbolism. Tāntrism means a system of thought, action and ritual based on the philosophy outlined above. A man can attain perfection (Siddhi) by going through the various processes of Yoga, by meditation, and by murmuring the Mantras and the sacred syllable 'Om'. Every letter of the alphabet is regarded as filled with some specific śakti or power. The ritual lays stress on the five tattavas or elements, viz., wine (madya), meat (māṅsa), fish (matsya), parched grain (mudra), and sexual intercourse (maithuna). The underlying principle is that the very sense-objects which drag us down and bind us by attachment and enjoyment (bhoga) are capable

of elevating us to the higher life if sublimated by contemplation (Yoga) and a proper technique were used as a means of worship of the Mother Goddess, who is the source of all power and action. While Dakshināchār holds to these truths and helps towards elevation, some of the followers deteriorated and the Vāmāchār school came into existence.

One of the most objectionable features of the worship known as Chakra Puja, is confined to a few Vāmāchāri Tāntrics. It consists in a mass promiscuous gathering of the votaries of both sexes at midnight round a circle (chakra). Various other degrading practices are also followed. Narsing Thākur, in Chapter VI of his Tāntric work, *Tārā Bhakti Sudhārṇava*, enumerates the types of women required for 'Chakra Puja' and mentions Nattis (actresses), Kāpālikas (nuns wearing necklaces of skulls), Veshyās (prostitutes), Dhobins (washerwomen), Nāpit (barber women), Brāhmaṇi, Śūdra, Gowar (milk-women) and Mālini (female gardeners). Chapter IV gives a description of the horrible 'Bīr Sādhana' practice (also called Chitā or Shav Sādhan). The corpse, preferably of an oilman (Teli) must be disinterred, and bound tightly with cords. The Pujari must sit on its breast and utter mantras so as to attain Siddhi or miraculous power! Fortunately, the misguided Vāmāchāri Tāntrics who were few and far between, are now even fewer still. They are disowned by the Dakshināchāris, who form an overwhelming majority.

Marshall frequently refers to the 'Jogis'. They were of two kinds, the learned ascetic philosophers or jogis of Sānkhya and Yoga, and the wandering religious mendicants who came to Bihar from Kashmir, Nepal and Bhawanagar (Kathiawar) for a dip in the holy Ganges. He mentions 'many strange things' such as their incredible longevity, their power to cure incurable diseases with herbs, pills or powders, their abstinence and celibacy, their power to change their bodies, to regulate or hold their breath for days, and their austerities. 'Some of the Hindu Fuckeers are said to be excellent good chymists and know exceedingly well how to kill Minerals. The Fuckeers were here [Hajipur] 40 or 50 in a company. Some of them are very fat, and some exceeding lean,' wrote Marshall.

Some reference has already been made to the Gorakhpanthi Yogis of the Nāth cult. Gorakhnath, whose date is uncertain, was a Śaivite Hindu who was, in course of time, deified. The practice of Yoga through various postures and prāṇāyām, so as to attain Siddhi, was an important feature of the Nāth Yogis.

A number of books on philosophy and logic were written during this period especially by scholars from Mithilā. Some treatises on religious rights and observances were also produced, but it has been found more convenient to treat them as Sanskrit literature as they are mostly commentaries.

ISLAM

The vast majority of the Muslims in Bihar, as in the rest of Moghal India, continued to be Hanafis, following the 'Fiqh' (jurisprudence) of Imam Azam Abu Hanifa. Hanafi law relies mostly on 'Qiyas' or analogical deductions. It does not differ in essentials from the other three schools, the Shaffi, the Maliki and the Hanbali schools. Moghal India, including Bihar, saw a large influx of Shiaites, due to the political and cultural connexions between the Timurids of India and the Safavids of Persia. The term Shia means 'party', and the Shiaites represented the followers of Ali, the 4th Caliph, and considered him the rightful successor of Muhammad. The Shiaites' 'Fiqh' (law) differed from the Sunnite system mainly in the doctrine of the 'Imāmat' (office of the Imam as religious leader), and was popular only in the Deccan, where they had kings and rulers of their own. Of the two most important sub-sections, the Ismailia (seveners) represented the Hinduized mercantile Khojas and Bohras; but the Ithna Asharis (twelvers) who had their stronghold in Persia and formed the major section, were spread over the different parts of India, including Bihar.

As one writer has pointed out, apart from the doctrine of the Imāmat, the difference between the Sunnite and the Shiaite schools is not very great. Goldzihra has said that there are no 'sects' in Islam, but only schools or 'Mazahibs' of Muslim law. They are both equally guided by the law and ordinances of the Quran. Belief in one God, in the apostleship of the Prophets of whom Muhammad was the last, in the revealed scriptures, specially the Quran, in the Judgement Day and in Resurrection are the fundamental doctrines of Islam, and they are held by all alike. 'In theory of law, all Muslims are brothers and equal and differences of opinion on questions of law do not constitute them into separate sects in any sense of the term,' says Dr Fajzee.

Something has already been written, about the Sufis, of pre-Moghal India. In Bihar the Chishtis, the Qadris and the Shattaris were very prominent and the last-named had established a close affinity with the Firdausi order. From a study of the books of the most important

Shattari order of the period we are forced to conclude that Indian practices, particularly of the Yogis, had influenced them.

The one aim of the saintly and pious Sufis was to do good to the people and to attain spiritual salvation. Religion and learning went hand in hand. Their mosques and khanqahs were centres of learning and virtual madrasas. H. Atāullah Zainabi's mosque at Phulwāri, bearing an inscription of Akbar's time still stands and the madrasa still continues. The mosque and the madrasa of Saif Khan, which has many saintly scholars on its staff, flourished till the end of the 18th century. The khanqah of the 18th century Taj-ul-Arifin of Shah Mojibul Haque of Phulwāri, a great Qadri saint, is still one of the important religious and educational centres of Muslims in Bihar. The saintly scholar, Mullā Abul Hasan of Darbhanga, at whose feet sat Princess Zebunnisa, the accomplished daughter of Aurangzeb, and the five great scholars of Bihar, members of the syndicate that compiled *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri,* were all noted saints of that time.

The relations of these saints with the Hindus were very cordial. In fact, they were venerated by a large number of Hindus. The only manuscript of the Urdu Masnavi, *Gauhar-i-Jauhri,* written in 1160 A.H., was found in the ruined library of a Kayastha family of Bakhra. We find Tara Chand, the Diwan of Patna, calling on the saint of Jandaha. The author of *Māsir-ul-Umara* records a very interesting interview between the learned Raja Man Singh, and the saint H. Shah Daulat.

The impact of Hinduism on Islam and vice versa has still to be considered. A manuscript in the Oriental Public Library, Patna, of the incomplete Persian Diwan of Syed Raja, 'written at Patna, on 27 Ramzan, 1098, or 31st year of Aurangzeb's reign' contains, at the end, three Ghazals in a mixed language which indicate the Sufi poet's acquaintance with the Tāntric, Nāth and Yoga cults. Some of the verses are worth quoting here:

(1) 'Mard bayad ta besozad jan-o-tan ra bhar-i-yar-mare asan deh jale (jare) panth joye chitta mar'. (A godly man would allow both his body and soul to be consumed for the Beloved. He should sit in the given posture (one of the 84 asanas), forget the body, look to the path, and suspend the process of thought).

(2) 'Pay ra gird awarad dil ra burad az ghair-i dost-pao bandhe manna munde baith ke duna jagiar'. (He stops his feet from moving and severs his heart from all others except the Beloved. With fettered feet and closed and concentrated mind he sits meditating on God and cares not even if the world is burnt to ashes.)

(3) 'Mizanad in khema ra bala-i-haflun asman. Sunn man son bund lage howe dishta sarge par'. (He pitches his tent right in the seventh heaven. By fixing his mind on the void through concentration and by tasting a drop of nectar, he is able to see beyond the heaven.)

(4) 'Surat-i-zeba-i'-u-chun deed Raja behijab-rang rata rup manta kam bidha tan bisar'. (When Raja saw the lovely face unveiled he became overwhelmed with the desire for union and pierced by the god of love, he forgot himself.)

Sikhism and the Sikh Guru

Bihar during this period cannot be called the home of the Sikhs, but since the great Patriot Saint, Guru Govind Singh was born in Patna, brief notice has to be taken.

Shri Guru Govind Singh, (Pl. XXII, Fig. 54) the tenth and last of the Sikh Gurus, was born at Patna in 1664. Guru Tej Bahadur, on his way to Assam on a peace mission, had left his wife at Patna where she gave birth to a son. The house today is a place of pilgrimage for Sikhs from all over India.

After a few years, the Guru incurred the Emperor Aurangzeb's displeasure by taking up the cause of some persecuted Kashmiri Brāhmaṇas who had asked for his help. The Emperor summoned him to Delhi and after being offered the choice of Islam or death, Guru Tej Bahadur was tortured as part of his punishment and then executed in 1675. The Gurudwara of Sisganj in Delhi is assumed to be the place of his execution.

It fell to the lot of Govind to become a Guru at the early age of ten. Tej Bahadur during his lifetime had consolidated his following. The community was strong not only in its religious devotion but also in its martial spirit and discipline, and was no longer the quietist sect which Guru Nanak (1464-1539) had founded. It had gained many adherents in eastern Punjab, and had also acquired considerable prestige among the Hindu population of the province by championing the cause of those oppressed by the Moghal rulers.

Nanak himself had made no secret of his anxiety for the peoples' miserable lot in his own time. In one of his songs he said:

You wear a loincloth, sacrificial mark and rosary,
And yet you earn a living from those whom you call mlechhas;
You perform the Hindu worship in private,
Yet, O my brethren, you read the book of the Muhamedans and adopt their manners.

When Govind succeeded as Guru, his followers thought it safe to transfer the child-Guru to Ānandpur, a small settlement which Tej Bahadur founded at the foot of the Himalayas. For nearly twenty years Guru Govind lived in obscurity in this retreat. But that time was not wasted. He was of a deeply religious temperament and studied the Hindu scriptures along with all the writings of the previous Gurus. He nourished the ambition of being a true protector of the Sikhs as well as of the Hindus.

He came out of retirement in 1695 and proclaimed his mission to the world not only as the Guru of his community but as a leader of a revived Hindu nation.

The first active step he took was to give effect to his ideas of organization and to consolidate the Sikhs into a disciplined and closely-knit religious body ready to fight like soldiers, under his undisputed authority. He announced the establishment of the Khālsā (literally, the liberated) on the lst of Baishak, 1699. The community that he established was in essence a theocracy which called for unqualified submission to the sovereign Guru. Conflict with the Moghals was inevitable, and varied fortune beset his attempts fully to resuscitate his people.

Though he seems to have been only a Guru of the Sikhs, he was in fact the hope of Hindu India of those times, and it was he who inspired his people with the hope that they could revive if they would but unite and fight.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of Guru Govind Singh was his declaration that the mission of the Gurus had ended with him and that the Sikhs in future were to seek the guidance of God only in the collective voice of the community and in the sacred writings of the ten Gurus. Thus, the community became a self-contained and self-propelling society of zealous and devoted followers of the teachings of Nanak and the nine Gurus that followed him. Guru Grantha Saheb, therefore had and has an immense influence on the Sikhs.

B. Society

Varṇa and Āśrama

SOCIAL LIFE—HINDUS

The general life of the Hindus, their social organization, with division of labour and occupations, and its cultural patterns did

not alter much with the changing circumstances. The rules and restrictions of the Varṇāśramadharma, instead of being relaxed, were tightened in Moghal times. Besides the four castes, a plethora of sub-castes, intermediate and mixed castes came into existence on account of the Varṇaśaṅkara (mixture of castes). Each was exclusive of all the others and observed strict rules as to what food may be eaten, with whom it may be eaten, whom to marry and so on.

Jaisi refers more than once to the traditional list of 'Chhatiso Jātis' (36 castes), including Brāhmaṇas (with sub-caste Gaur); Kshatriyas (with sub-castes such as Bais, Chandels, Tomars, Gaharwars, Panwars, Guhilots, Bahels, Parihars, Khatis [Khatri]), Kāyasthas, Kalhans, Pachwans and others; Vaiśyas (Bania, Agarwals and so on) and also Kalwars (distillers), Barias (sellers and cultivators of betel leaves), Patuis (braiders or makers of strings or tapes), and the low-caste Dharis and Hādis (called Mehtars and Halalkhors by the Moghals). Nicolo Conti and Tavernier, the Italian and French travellers of the 15th and 17th centuries respectively, count 84 and 72 castes. But neither Jaisi nor these travellers give correct figures of the different castes and professional classes. Their sub-divisions in Moghal times had become too numerous to mention.

There was in this period a distinct tendency of rising in the social scale of some of the mixed and the lower castes. A large part of Bihar was occupied from remote times by non-Aryan aborigines such as the Kols, the Cheros, and others, some of whom specially the Cheros, emerged as Rajputs. They were dispossessed of their lands by the immigrant Rajputs and Bhumihars or Babhans. These two martial races of medieval Bihar were the landowners. The most important estates of the Rajputs were those of the Chandels of Gidhaurs, the Rajputs of Kharagpur (the larger and ruling section of which was converted to Islam in the 16th century), the Garharwars of Ramnagar or Chotanagpur, and the Panwars, known as the Ujjainias of Bhojpur, Dumraon, Buxar and Jagdishpur, in Shahabad district. The Babhans or Bhumihars (from Sanskrit, those who seize the earth), were very numerous in Bihar and were known as Sarwaia Brāhmaṇas. They were, like their fellow brothers of the Punjab, called Mahiwals (lords of the earth) and the Tyagis of U.P. They claimed to be Brāhmaṇas who had given up their priestly functions and became cultivators and landholders. Besides their common martial outlook and colonizing habits, some of the Bhumihars and Rajputs have common names, such as Kinwar, Gautam, Kausik, Sakarwar, and

so on. Suffixes such as Rai and Singh are also common. One striking thing about them and some other castes is that they derive their names from some common ancestor, ṛishis or sages, or from places they originally belonged to. The Oinwar Babhans of Darbhanga and the Pilichwars of Patna originally belonged to Oini and Pilich. The Dronewars of Narhan trace their origin to the great archer Dronacharya, the teacher of the Pandavas. Some called themselves Viśvāmitra.

The writer class of the Kāyasthas who monopolized the offices of the finance and correspondence departments of the Muslim State and were also Qanungos, became much more conspicuous in Bihar than before. Besides the Ambasthas and the Karanas, the older inhabitants of the province, we find others, such as Śrivāstavas, mostly Dusrais and rarely Khares, Saxenas, Mathurs, Asthanas and others coming with their Muslim masters and supplanting and eclipsing the other descendants of the mythical Chitragupta, in official employ, in wealth and influence, and in culture and refinement. Raja Sitab Rai and Maharaja Kalyan Singh Ashiq were Saxenas of Delhi settled in Bihar. Lala Ujagarchand Ulfat, and his daughter's son, Raja Piyare Lal Ulfati and others were Mathurs of Shahjahanabad who made Bihar their home. But Raja Ram Narain Mauzoon, a Khare Śrivāstava, and Raja Dhiraj Narain, were Biharis. Of the main sections of the Kurmis, the Awadhia, Kuchaisa, Dhamaila and others, the first definitely claim to be the descendants of Kshatriyas who had taken to cultivation. The Ahirs who form a large part of the Hindu population of the province began to call themselves Yadvas. They, along with many others, had been included by Jyotiriśwar Thākur among the Mandajatis.

The Brāhmaṇas, specially of Mithilā, made a distinction between 'sidh' (completed) and 'asidh' food such as bhat (boiled rice) and dal (cooked pulse) as distinct from 'puri' (a kind of cake fried in butter or ghee) and 'cheora' (rice parched in a certain way and eaten dry). Sidh food could be eaten only with close relations. There was no mixing while eating and the inferior castes were excluded. Food seen by the Śūdras and the Mlechhas had to be discarded. Meals could not be taken facing south and without special clothes being worn. 'Pattar' (leaves), preferably of the plantain tree were used, rather than plates on festive occasions.

The universal use of betel leaves (pan) and areca nut (supari), specially after every meal, continued to be the vogue. Wrestling

(dangal), Kabaddi and Chaupar (a sort of backgammon), Chausar (another game with long dice), and Chaturang (chess) were popular pastimes. Villagers after a hard day's labour gathered to listen to stories from the Purāṇas and the Epics, specially the *Rāmāyana* of Vālmiki (not yet of Tulsidas). Professional bards sang tales of Alha Udal and wandering mendicants with single-stringed instruments narrated the story of Raja Bhartṛihari. Of course, there were people who amused themselves by arranging dancing parties or 'Nautch'.

It is worth while considering here what European travellers say about the social life of the Hindus of Patna. Tavernier describing the eclipse of the sun of 2 July 1666 at Patna says that, 'it was a prodigious thing to see the multitude of people, men, women and children running to the Ganges to wash themselves.' Marshall notes a bathing festival in August 1671, and an eclipse of the moon in September and says, 'Every full moon and also when eclipses happen the Brāhmaṇas meet at their church or 'Duira' and thither call the common sort of people whom they instruct and teach to avoid evil and tell men what will be their punishment if [they] ly [lie], such [punishment] if commit murder, such if forswear themselves, such if ly (lie) with neighbours' wives; and if have committed any of these sins, then they must sacrifice such and such things or must give to the poor, and such things to the Brāhmaṇas'.

Ralph Fitch (1583-91) marked some of the strange practices and customs at Patna. 'These Indians when they be scorched [referring to corpses partly burnt] and thrown into the water, the men swim with their faces downwards, the women with their faces upwards. I thought they tied something to them to cause them to do so, but they say no.' He found, 'many thieves in the country which be like to the Arabians, for they have no certain abode but are sometimes in one place and some times in another.' Obviously, he refers to some gypsy tribes. Fitch makes some other interesting observations about the women of Patna. 'Here the women been so decked with silver and copper that it is strange to see. They use no shoes by reason of the rings of silver and copper which they wear on their toes.' About the dwellings he says, 'The houses are simple, made of earth, and covered with straw, the streets are very large.' Patna was a large trading centre and exporter of goods. 'In the town, there is a trade of cotton and cloth of cotton, much sugar, which they carry from hence to Bangala and India, very much opium and other commodities they carry.' A Hindu official of Bihar mentioned by Abul Fazal

has also been referred to, 'He that chiefe here under the king Zelal-din Echabar the great Magor (Jalal-ud-din Akbar) is called Tipper Dass, and is of great account among the people.' The cheats have been spared. 'Here in Patenan I saw a dissembling prophet which sat upon a horse in the market-place and made as though he slept and many of the people came and touched his feet with their hands, and then kissed their hands. They took him for a great man, but he was a Lasie Lubber [clumsy fellow, lout]. The people of these countries be much given to much prating and dissembling hypocrites.' Tavernier calls the Banjaras 'Manaries' and says that they dwelt in tents and transported by bullock-pack provisions such as corn, rice, pulses and salt. 'The dress of their women is but simple cloth, white or coloured which is bound five or six times like a petticoat from the waist downwards. They tattoo their skin with flowers.' He also refers to the excessive use of 'Cowries' (small shells then used as coins) and a special knot on their heads.

It is a pity that the contents of the rare MS., *Sarva Deśa Vrittānta Sangrah* by Mahesh Thākur, have not yet come to light. His *Tithi Tattva Chintāmaṇi* throws some light on the socio-religious conditions of the period. Some reference to the 'Vrats' or fasts and festivals described by him may be made here. Those from the months of Śrāvan to Asādh enumerated by him were as follows: (1) *i.* Gauri Vrat, a women's festival on 3rd Śrāvan; *ii.* Nāg Panchami, on 5th L.H.; *iii.* Hayagriva in honour of a Paurāṇic Raja, on 13th L.H. (now obsolete); *iv.* Rākhi Bandhan on the same day. (2) *i.* Kṛishṇa Behula Puja, by 'Sohagin' women on 4th Bhadon; *ii.* Kṛishṇa Janmāshtami, on 8th Bhadon D.H.; *iii.* Kuśa Amāvasyā, by Brāhmaṇas with 'Kuśa' grass and 'til' (seed of the sesamum) on 15th Bhadon; *iv.* Hari Tālika Vrat, by women on 18th Bhadon; *v.* Ganesh Chaturthi, on 19th Bhadon; *vi.* Sūrya Shashthi, sun worship by women on 21st Bhadon; *vii.* Dwaita Ashtami, by women on 23rd Bhadon. (3) *i.* Pithi or Pitri Paksha (mentioned also by the 12th century Persian writer, Gurdezi), fifteen or sixteen consecutive lunar days of Bhadon and Aświn were devoted to Shrādh—the ninth day, Mātṛi Navami being most important; *ii.* Gaja Chhaya on 13th Aświn; *iii.* Durga Puja or Nava-Ratra (nine nights); the first to the tenth day of the L.H. of Aświn; the eighth day was Maha Ashtami, the ninth was Mahanavami and the tenth Vijaya Dasami or Dasahrah. (4) *i.* Lakshmi Puja and Dipāwali, 'festival of lamps' on the fifteenth and sixteenth day of Kartik; *ii.* Chitra Gupta and Dawat Puja, on 17th

Kartik; *iii.* Chath and Ekadasi Deouthan on 26th Kartik; *iv.* Sama Puja, by women on 30th Kartik; *v.* Kartik Purnima in honour of Śiva's victory, *vi.* Kaushik Ashnan—30th Kartik L.H. (5) Makar Saṅkrānti, New Year's festival (usually January 14). (6) *i.* Sūrya Vrat; *ii.* Basant Panchmi, 20th Magh, spring festival; *iii.* Bhishma Ashtami, on 23rd Magh; *iv.* Purṇavasi; *v.* Gang—Ashnan; *vi.* Narak Nirban Chaturdashi, 14th Magh D.H. ; *vii.* Mahāśivrātri, 14th Phalgun D.H.; whole day in honour of Mahādeva. *viii.* Holi identified with Dolyātrā, observed on 3rd and 4th Phalgun; and *ix.* Rām Naumi, 9th Chait, L.H.

Muslim Society

DRESS

Turning to the Muslims of Bihar in Moghal times, we find a considerable change in the social structure, costumes, customs and manners of the community owing to a large influx of new elements, specially of the highly cultured Persians and Turco-Mongols with their refined aesthetic tastes, and also because of the increasing number of converts who could not help retaining some of their old Hindu beliefs and practices. The Turks had been replaced by the Afghans, who were in turn eclipsed by the Moghals (now the ruling race) and their friends the Persians, in power, wealth and influence. The early Muslims 'were short ruddy men dressed in short tunics of thick cloth and always in boots.' Their headgear was generally the Kulah or tall 'Tārtari' cap. The strong, bearded Afghans with their olive complexions, aquiline noses and brown eyes wore long coats, large turbans wound round pointed skull-caps, and loose baggy trousers called shalwars. The tall, fair-complexioned Moghals with their short, broad noses and less abundant beards, and, the handsome well-formed Iranis with their fine moustaches wore, several types of dress such as the kulah or pugree, the qamis (full-sleeved shirt), the jama qiba, (long coat), the jama-i-punhahdar (tight-fitting, ankle-length, wadded coat), the gadar (a coat longer than the qiba) the peshwaz (a long coat open in front), dotahi sadris and mirzais, the fatuhi, the dagla (a quilted vest worn under armour), the farji and farghul (fur cloaks), shalwars, pyjamas, mozas, and high-heeled boots, velvet shoes or light slippers. Some of the Imperial Moghals, like Babar and Humayun had highly developed aesthetic tastes and were interested in setting new fashions. The Moghal dressmakers displayed their skill in a gorgeous combination of colour and shape. The crimson sashes with

flowered borders worn round the waist, the cream-coloured 'Anga' (upper garment), the lovely shoes, and the embroidered turbans were also copied by the aristocratic classes of Muslims in Bihar and elsewhere.

The costume of the lower, and also of the religious, orders was simple and inexpensive. The dress of the average Muslim was a felt cap or a turban, white cotton drawers or full trousers tied at the waist with a running string (izarband), a qamis or kurta, and a dopatta (scarf). The poorer classes, as also the low-caste converts, wore lungis or dhotis, fotahs (a small sheet worn like a 'gamcha'), kurtas and pugrees. They usually went without footwear.

Religious people like Sūfīs and ascetics, and men of learning like Mullas and Ulemas wore special dress. The orthodox tried to follow the Prophet and his companions. The Prophet's wardrobe was simple, consisting of a cotton or woollen dastar or amama (turban) white, black or green, with one end hanging between the shoulders, pairahan, sarawil, rida and nalain. His sleeves ended at the wrist, and he did not wear long flowing robes. The Theologians generally wore jubbas (long vests resembling shirts), aba, trousers, socks, a kind of shoe and a scarf on the shoulders. They avoided luxury and multiplicity in garments, cloth of fine texture, silk velvet and brocade and even fur and coloured cloth except the dastar which was dyed green or black. Beneath the dastar, the Sūfīs wore a skull-cap called a taqia. They disfavoured the kulah (cap) known as the lotia. Some of them wore a tall darvesh cap called the qalansuwah as found in a pencil sketch of H. Shah Ayatullah and H. Shah Mujibullah Qadri, the 18th century saints of Phulwāri, drawn by someone without their knowledge.

We have much less information about the Muslim women of Bihar. Except the new converts, the upperclass ladies never wore saris, which were considered to be a mark of inferiority. They were usually dressed in shalwars and pyjamas, shirts or qamis (with full sleeves which tended to shorten, leaving the rest of the arm free for ornaments such as chooris and bangles). Those in affluent circumstances wore the 'lahnga' (a long, loose skirt), chola and angia (a bodice with short sleeves). An age-old wedding song contains the following significant lines, 'Ooncha chola, neecha daman gabhurwa so mera re.' They also used shawls or doshalas and covered their heads with dopattas or orhnis (sheets of fine cloth) of cotton or silk. The ladies in Bihar did not use the close-fitting chooridar drawers

worn in U.P. They also wore slipper-like shoes but no socks or stockings. When visiting other people's houses they put on the 'burqa' (a face-veil and robe covering the whole body), but those who could not afford one wrapped themselves in a chaddar.

Religious literature refers to furnishings such as the nihalcha (coverlet or mattress), razai (quilt), qalim (blanket), boria (a kind of mat), galicha (a small carpet), tor (a net thrown on women's palki), takhtposh (coverlet), chandini (a white sheet over the carpet) and jajam (cloth over the carpet to sit on). Women wore gold, silver and jewelled ornaments which were forbidden to men. They wore glass or lac bangles of various colours, chooris, bazooband and kangan round the wrist and on the arms. The rich sported silver bangles and chains and necklaces (hars) of silver or even gold, and wore rings in the ears and nose (naths and besars) as well as on the fingers. Their articles of toilet consisted of soaps and perfumes of various kinds (including the 'Itre'-Jahangiri), vermilion for the forehead, heena for the palms of the hands and on the feet, and collyrium for the eyes. Pan-chewing was also very popular. The rieh used soap, saffron, musk and so on. There were hammams or public baths and shampooings for ladies. One such hammam has been mentioned by a European traveller, and a quarter in old Patna is still called Mohalla Hammam.

FOOD

In the East, women are considered experts in the culinary art, but we know little about the cooking skill of the Muslim ladies of Bihar. Of course there were cooks, male and female, and the 'tanur' (oven) system also prevailed which provided ready-made bread. The standard of living in matters of dress, diet, and social comforts was fairly high in Moghal times. The food of the upper classes comprised seasoned and spicy dishes such as biryani, pulao of several kinds such as muzaafar (saffroned) mahi and mugh pulao, kababs of various kinds (pasenda, nargisi), kuftas, qeemas, qalia, qurmas, dopiyaza and mutanjan, tumaj, chaglas (the last two being Turkish dishes), all preparations of meat with rice, butter or vegetables, and also parothas, shirmals, baqarkhani, samosas, chapatis, kulchas and sulalis, all made of flour. The fried or oven-baked bread called nan was a great favourite. Sweetmeats of various kinds were also relished. The following sweetmeats were introduced into India by the Muslims: jilabi, burfi, gakuti (miscalled makuti), habshi, halwa-i-sohan, sewai,

nan khatai and gulshakri (rose conserves mixed with honey). They also relished abshooras, or takkurs (buttermilk diluted with one-fourth of water) after meals, followed of course, by the inevitable pan. They had also fruits, dried or fresh, and sweet drinks such as sharbat and flummery, also called faluda, made with flour, milk and eggs. John Marshall ate grapes in Singhia, 'which grew in Hadgepore [Hajipur]' and we also get references to vineyards at Patna. Raja Ram Narayan used to send to Bengal not only the mangoes of 'Bagh-Chajju' but also the fine rice of Patna, basmati (called Shahpasand), and seeds of 'Sarda' procured from the West. Raja Shitab Rai had sown the seeds which had borne a good crop at Patna.

To the refined Irani Diwan of Bihar, Mirza Muiz Fitrat, the very sight and smell of jack-fruit (kathal) was repulsive. However, he satisfied the fondness of Hajipur people for big, sweet, bulky, fruit by growing sarda (melons) and sending very good specimens as presents to Nawab Saif Khan, the then governor of Allahabad. But the Indianized Shattari saint H. Rukn-ud-dīn of Jandaha was very fond of jack-fruit and mangoes.

The menu of the Sūfīs was very simple. One important thing which needs mention is the invariable use of salt in imitation of the Prophet. The eating of onion and garlic was not banned by the Prophet but he advised the people not to join in congregational prayer after partaking of them lest the smell be offensive to others. The Sūfīs observed this injunction.

GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

The author of *Mithilā Tatto Vimāsh* quotes from a contemporary work *Dvait Vivek* which refers to Raja Rup Narain alias Rambhadra Dev, playing chess with Sultan Sikandar Lodi at Patna. The game has always been popular with both Hindus and Muslims. Ganjafa (a game played with a pack of 96 cards divided into 8 suits), said to have been introduced by Babar, was played by the nobility. Kite-flying was a favourite pastime among many classes of people in Patna and Bihar. Pigeon-flying and the objectionable sport of cock-fighting and ram-fighting were also enjoyed. An interesting account of an animal-fight enjoyed by the incompetent governor of Bihar, Mir Jumla, has been given by the historian Sheo Das.

CUSTOMS AND CEREMONIES

The rare and voluminous manuscript *Ahsan-ul-Akhlaq* dated

1781, by a Chisti Saint of Rajgir, gives details of all that a religious Muslim ought to do and all that he must avoid. We get also a long list of such practices as were considered censurable, such as eating meat in a state of impurity or near a dead body, putting on trousers while standing or leaning against the doorway, getting garments repaired while still on the body, allowing spiders to spin cobwebs in the house, puffing out a candle with the breath, eating onions at night, urinating in a state of nakedness, and so on. More important is his list of customs and ceremonies which had been adopted from the Hindus by the Muslims. The Chisti author refers to some deviations concerning marriage which had crept into Muslim society. He first states what is laid down by Muslim law and then refers to the practices and ceremonies which were in keeping with the Hindu customs, but which should be given up. Some of them are as follows: Rātjaggā (the night watch and rejoicing) and the ceremony of filling the earthen pots, Kalaśasthāpana; the 'Chauk' ceremony in which a square space was 'cleaned' and a lamp with four burning wicks (falita) placed in it; tying the Kangana (thread) round the bridegroom's wrist and fastening his hair into a knot with silk or cotton thread; gatherings of all types of ladies and strange women to put oil on the head of the bride; Mangru or Mangini (betrothal); the ceremony of making 'tikā' marks on the forehead of the bride and bridegroom; preparing earlier a degadan (fireplace) and the ceremonial singing of women in chorus around it; permitting anyone, boys included, into the wedding house; the taking of the bride to the bridegroom; the carrying of the bride by her brother and bringing her to give 'Jalwa' or 'Jurwa' (state of being joined); measuring the size of the bride and so on. Perhaps the Muslims had picked up some of the old Hindu customs and manners which the converts had retained as part of their heritage but which offended the orthodox Muslims. Despite their protests, however, some of these customs and many more can still be seen among the Muslims.

We come across many examples of interpenetration of ideas and practices of Hindus and Muslims. John Marshall refers to the 'Moor's Tombe', 'about 2 miles from the Aśokan pillar at Bakhra, upon the top of a steep Hill' which appears originally to have been a stūpa. This 'Moor' was the Shattari Saint, Qāzī Ola. One might refer to the picturesque annual festival associated with the cult of Ghazi Mian and celebrated both by Hindus and Muslims, particularly by a sect of mendicant beggars at Maner, Patna, Saran and other

places. They used to sing and dance round a long bamboo pole wrapped in coloured rags and with horses' hair tied to the top. The function was held on the 1st of Jeth (May or June). Von Graaf, the Dutch traveller, while sailing along the Ganges in 1669, saw the festival being celebrated at Maner. Sikandar Lodi had tried in vain throughout his dominion to stop not only the annual procession of Salaar Masud but also the display of Tazias in the Muharram procession, so peculiar to India and entirely contrary to orthodox belief.

HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS

One finds many instances of the spirit of friendship and comradeship which may be taken to be a characteristic feature of the Hindu-Muslim social history of Moghal times. Raja Ram Narayan, an orthodox Hindu, never missed his Ekādaśī even when on official tour, as we find from his own letters; but his other letters (Pl. XIX. Fig. 47) tell us that soon after the visibility of the Muharram moon, he made arrangements for performing the Muharram ceremonies. The relevant extracts from letters to Alīvardī, need quotation; Since the first of Muharram all arrangements concerning the essential ceremonies of Tazia [model of the tomb of Imam Husain at the Karbālā, lighting, and distribution of food among the poor had been made in the mausoleum of the martyr Nawab Haibat Jung, father of Sirāj-ud-Daula]. 'I, the child of your slave, had appointed Fayaz Alī Khan [a Bakshi who once deputized for the Raja at Patna] to look after the affairs, and he, accompanied by his son and followers, remained present within the area of the mausoleum for one Pahar in the day and two Pahars after nightfall. Due care is taken that every one of the necessary ceremonies such as the keeping of Tazias, offering of prayers, reciting of verses in memory of the Imam, and the mourning, is observed. I, your slave, also have the good fortune of acquiring [religious] merit by visiting the Tazia house. All the people of the city came to pay their respects to the tomb but Mirza Naseer.'

The two collections of letters of Lala Ujagarchand Ulfat, *Insha-i Gharib* and *Insha-i-Ulfat*, are full of interesting information concerning the cordial relations between Hindus and Muslims and the common participation in Jashn-i-Chiragan on the river Ganges (one was arranged by Nawab Fakhr-ud-Daula, described by Ulfat in a poem dated 1142) and also in certain festivals and festivities such as Basant, Diwali, Nauroz, Muharrum and others. Maharaja Kalyan Singh,

the son of Maharaj Shitab Rai, who had male issue only from his Muslim Begum, was suspected by some to have become a Muslim but he repudiated the charge in two powerful Qasidas one of which began: Kafiram Hindu nazadam. Man Musalman nistam. (I am an infidel I am a born Hindu. I am never a Muslim).

C. Education, Science, Language and Literature

EDUCATION

Foreigners like Babar, and Bernier, the 17th century French traveller, did scant justice to the progress of education in India when they made remarks which do not stand the test of scrutiny. Babar passed through Jaunpore, so famous for its classical Muslim learning as to be called by one of his own descendants, Shah Jahan, the 'Shiraz' of India (Purab Shiraz Maast). Even before the Sharqi kings, Zafarabad in Jaunpore attracted scholars from Bihar and elsewhere. The future Sher Shah studied history, philosophy, literature and jurisprudence there. Though Babar paid two hurried visits to different parts of Bihar during his expedition to the East, he had no knowledge of Tirhut and the other districts where institutes of learning were known to abound. Among his contemporaries it would suffice to mention the three great savants of Mithilā, each an institution in himself. The name of Miśaru Miśra whose book, *Vivekchandrasi* is still a standard work on Dharmaśāstra, dealing as it does with eighteen disputed points enumerated by Manu, occurs in a sale deed of slaves, dated 1515. Dinanath Thākur wrote as many as eight works on Dharmaśāstra and the date 1529 occurs in one of his works, *Tantra Kaumudi*. The third was the versatile scholar, Śaṅkar Miśra, who wrote a large number of books on rhetoric, drama, philosophy and logic. These and a host of others discharged the sacred obligation of imparting education in the higher branches of knowledge. Bhaura, Sarasan, Mangrauni, Uchaith, Koilakh, Habi, Pilakhvara, Gajahra, Sugaun, Naivāni, Rānitol, Pahitol, Tarauni, Andhra, Pandaul (all in Darbhanga district,) Mehsi and Sehaul (Bhagalpur district) and Damdaha, Puṇidaha, Ukhsena (Purnea district) were famous seats of Sanskrit learning in Moghal times.

HIGHER EDUCATION: SANSKRIT

The tols or chatuspāthī were the higher Brāhmaṇic institutions of Sanskrit learning, so called because the four śāstras, grammar, law, the Purāṇas and the darśanas (philosophy), were studied there.

They were scattered in numerous towns and villages, specially in Mithilā. Education in Bihar and elsewhere during the Muslim period was mainly religious and the monopoly of the Brāhmaṇas, though a few Kayasthas had opened pāthśālās where they imparted instruction on subjects of a secular nature and of practical utility. Hindu education was supported more by individual pandits and gurus and private benefactors than by government grants. It was confined to the twice-born, Brāhmaṇas, Kayasthas and Vaisyas. In the Bihar districts visited by Mr Adams in the early 19th century, 'both the teachers and the students without a single exception belonged to that (twice-born) caste.'

Education was a public charge kept up by voluntary contributions and not by State taxes. Students often resided in the house of the teacher and received from him not only instruction, but also free board and lodging. The baithak-khānā (drawing-room) or mandap of the pandits or of some wealthy persons, and the humble chaupari huts, usually made of clay and consisting of three to ten rooms in two rows with a reading room open on all sides at the farther end, and erected at the expense of the teacher, served the purpose of schools and colleges.

On completing his studies, which varied from twelve to twenty-five years, the student was free to make voluntary gifts, presents or a gratuity to the teacher. There was no system of public examinations or granting diplomas, but there were tests held by an assemblage of pandits. The student who succeeded and was found capable of teaching was given the title of Upādhyāya. If his pupil also was successful, the original teacher was called Mahopādhyāya, and if the same thing was true again of his student, then the first teacher earned the title of Mahāmahopādhyāya.

The advanced course consisted of the four Vedas, the sacred sciences, logic (Nyāya), law (Dharmaśāstra), grammar (Vyākaraṇa), lexicography (Kosh), rhetoric (Alaṅkāra), philosophy (Darśan), music (Saṅgita), poetry (Kāvya), drama (Nātak), astronomy and astrology (Jyotish), medicine (Ayurveda) and the tantra. In Mithilā the subjects were Dharmaśāstra, Nyāya, Jyotish, Darśan, and general literature including Vyākaraṇa, Kosh, and Kāvya. Medicine was not favoured by many through fear of handling impure and dirty things, though Sakaldipi Brāhmaṇas cultivated it and studied the works of Charak and Suśruta. The Mithilā pandits had no particular enthusiasm for mathematics except for what was included in astronomy and astrology. But Kuttak, and a chapter on algebra

(Bijganit), *Lilāvatī*, and astronomical works such as *Siddhānta Śiromaṇi* and *Sūrya Siddhānta* by a 13th century savant, Bhāskarāchārya, and specially Chandreśwar Thākur's commentary *Amalā* were studied by many. Thus science was not neglected. *Makaranda*, a calendar, was very popular in Mithilā. There were many commentaries on it by Mithilā scholars. One of the most important was by Gokulnāth Hemankar Thākur, a grandson of Maheśa Thākur. In his *Granthmālā* he gives us a list of solar and lunar eclipses for a thousand years!

Pupils flocked to Mithilā for a special study of the standard texts of logic such as the *Nyāya Sūtras* of Gautama and the *Tattva-Chintāmaṇi* of the 12th century savant, Gangeśa Thākur, the founder of *Navya Nyāya* (New Logic).

In Dharmaśāstra, besides the ancient Mithilā jurist, Yājñavalkya, the founder of the Mitakshara school, the works of Keśava Miśra, Sridhar Upādhyāya and others were greatly prized. In grammar, the standard treatise of Pāṇini (*Ashtādhyāyi*), Patañjali's *Mahābhāshya*, Kālādhar's *Mugdha Bodha* and *Bhaṭṭi Kāvya* were in general use. *Siddhānta Kaumudi*, a grammar of high standard, written probably in the time of Jahangir was also in great favour. In later Moghal times, *Ashtādhyāyi* was replaced by *Laghu Siddhānta Kaumudi* by Bhattacharya, a Bengali scholar. Books on other subjects in general use were *Chhando Mañjari* (metrics), *Kāvya Prakāśā* by Mammat (rhetoric), *Khanda Khanda Khadya* by Sri Harsha (poetry), *Vedāntasāra, Vedānta Panchadaśi, Shāririk Sūtra* (philosophy) and so on. The heroic poems, *Raghuvaṁśa* and *Kumārsambhava, Naishadh Charita* and the well known *Śakuntalā* of Kālidāsa, *Kādambari* of Bāṇabhaṭṭa and also the *Śiśupālbadh* by Māgha and others were studied in earlier stages.

It is proper to conclude this short sketch of higher learning in Mithilā with the name and works of Dhanānand Das, a Kayastha and a great Tāntric of Pandaul (Darbhanga district) whose date as given in one of his works *Mātangi Kusumāñjali Tantra* is A.D. 1750. He was also the author of *Mantra Kalpadrum*, a work of encyclopaedic knowledge on Tāntrism. He also wrote a book on lexicology entitled *Vāk Chāturya Tarangini*, imparting a knowledge of Persian through Sanskrit. The manuscript, which was written for his brother Nityanand, is in his own handwriting.

PERSIAN AND ARABIC

Regarding the cultivation of Arabic and Persian we know of at least three chief centres of Islamic learning in Babar's time. One was

Maner. Bihar town was a seat of Muslim learning and culture, the residence of Shamshul Huq Badh Huqqani, who attracted scholars from distant places. Hajipur was still another centre of Arabic and Persian studies.

An interesting report submitted to Sir John Shore, the President of the Committee of Revenue, Fort William, dated August 1783, contains an account of the madrasa establishment at Bhagalpur. It may be summarized as follows:— 'The Seminary was instituted in the reign of Jahangir [really Akbar, 983-1576] by Maulana Mohammad Shahbaz, a religious man of much learning. He had from one to 200 attendants [students] many of whom he maintained from a fund. Maulana Mohammad Shahbaz left four sons of whom Mohammad Salaam succeeded. Shah Shuja, in A.H. 1063, conferred a grant of land on him, from Perganā Colganj of 500 Bighas and from Perganā Boglipur. He had 150 students in his lifetime.' The recital continues till the last reference to Maulana Abid during the reign of Muhammad Shah when the number of students was only thirty.

The Bihar towns had many madrasas and colleges at different times. There was one at Chistiana of which the most famous teacher and scholar was M. Abdul Muqtadir, the author of *Marghub-uz-Ẓākirin*. Another was at Murarpur. A third was at Mirdad Mohalla under Qāzī Ziaullah who, together with another son of Bihar, Shaikh Saleh, tutored Prince Aziz-ud-dīn, later Alamgir II. Then there was the institution which produced such great savants as Maulana Mohi-ud-dīn alias Mulla Mohan Bihari and others.

There were three logicians and theologians bearing the same name of Ghulam Yahya, one of whom was from Barh and a Qāzī. Barh was another centre of which the most important luminary was Mulla Mahmud Danishmand, whose mosque and mausoleum (but not the Madrasa) bearing inscriptions of the time of Shah Jahan can still be seen. Only a few pillars (remnants of a Buddhist educational centre) now represent the site of the converted Madrasa at Rajgir run by Mulla Mansoor Danishmand and his son, Mulla Abdus Sami. There are references to other madrasas in many places.

Several scholars of Bihar served as teachers to the Timurid princes. One was Maulana Qāzī Mujibullah, son of Maulana Hafizullah, who had taught Jahandār Shah. Maulana Amanullah (born at the end of Akbar's reign) received grants for teaching Imperial princes, including Md. Muazzam (the future Shah Alam), and died at a very old age in the time of Aurangzeb. Other Bihari teachers of Prince

Muazzam were Mulla Zia-ud-dīn Muhaddis, and Mulla Siraj-ud-dīn Ahmad of Faridpur, who was the pupil of his own scholarly father, Mulla Saeed.

The most famous college in Bihar was the Madrasa-i-Saif Khan, founded on the bank of the river Ganges, west of the Fort of Sher Shah, in 1629, by Saif Khan, the governor of Bihar. It flourished at the time of Nawab Zain-ud-dīn Haibat Jung, governor of Bihar, (1740-48) who added a library to it. The author of *Siyar-ul-Mutakhereen* has mentioned some of its scholars. Besides these names we also get the names of Maulana Syed Kamaluddin, M. Yusuf Zarif, the most worthy pupil of Maulana Nizam-ud-dīn Suhalvi, M. Md. Naseer of Sheikhpura (Monghyr), and M. Abdullah of Patna. The madrasa had a magnificent building, the remains of which can still be seen.

There is no clear indication of the courses of study at the Madrasa of Saif Khan and others. Abul Fazal however, gives us an idea of the curriculum which was 'evidently intended,' says Dr. Keay, for the madrasas, rather than for primary schools. 'Every boy,' writes Abul Fazal, 'ought to read books in morals, arithmetic, notations peculiar to arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, medicine, logic, the Tabil (physical) Riyazi (mathematical) and Ilahi (divine) sciences and history, all of which may gradually be acquired.' Here then is a preponderance of scientific subjects and subjects of practical utility. According to Blochman, the curriculum in the madrasas included ethics, arithmetic, accounts, agriculture, economics, the art of administration, physics, logic, natural philosophy, abstract mathematics, divinity and history. The curriculum uniformly followed in later Moghal times in Bihar, as also elsewhere, was however what is called the Dars-i-Nizamia. Though theological and scholastic studies were in greater favour, science and the art of administration were not neglected. There was no bar to Hindus and Muslims studying side by side in the same institution.

'The Hindus from the 16th century,' writes Blochman, 'took so zealously to Persian education that before another century had elapsed, they had come up to the Muhammadans in point of literary acquirement.'

The following important Hindu writers and scholars may be mentioned : Raja Ram Narayan: Raja Kiratchand (Diwan of Haibat Jung and Alivardi), Balmukund Mashood, Maharaja Kalyan Singh, Laxmi Narayan of Hajipur in Alamgir's time, Ram Prasad of Patna,

Diwan Kanjhi, and Maharaja Mitrajit Singh of Tikari. The Maharaja was a learned scholar of Persian and Arabic and wrote a pamphlet on agriculture in the Gaya district.

ELEMENTARY *EDUCATION*

The educational institutions established and conducted on old lines were either of an advanced or elementary character. Besides the Hindu Tols and Muslim Madrasas, places of higher education, there was a network of primary schools, the Hindu pāthśālās and Muslim maktabs, in every town and large village. They were run by those who had 'devoted themselves to teaching with little other remuneration than bare subsistence.' Though in Bihar and elsewhere education was the handmaid of religion, the religious element was more marked in advanced institutions than those at the elementary stages. Hindu boys could read side by side with Muslim boys in the more democratic maktabs, from which no class of the Muslim community was excluded. Boys of the lower castes could be admitted in the pāthshālās, specially those run by the Kayasthas who, next to Brāhmins, formed the most literate community among the Hindus and considerded it their duty to instruct boys in elementary subjects of practical utility. 'The aim of such pāthśālās was strictly utilitarian' and after teaching reading, writing and accounts, secular subjects formed the chief part of the course 'to qualify the boys for their several occupations of life and to protect them against unfair dealings.' The village tutor on certain occasions received a small fee and other customary presents from pupils, usually in kind. Elementary education was often imparted to Hindu boys under a tree, or the verandah of a private house, or at the temple. In the case of Muslim boys, the floor or portico of a mosque, the rooms or veranda attached to a shrine or mausoleum, or the doorway of the teacher's house served as maktabs. The system of teaching in the house of the preceptor has been in vogue from remote times. There are instances of Muslim boys being made to begin their education at the age of four years, four months and four days. But the average age of both Hindu and Muslim boys for entering a pāthśālā or maktab was five or six years and their stay in those institutions, which served and acted as 'feeders' to tols or madrasas, varied from five to ten years. There was also the domestic system of instruction. Many eminent authors and scholars of Bihar and elsewhere received their early education at home from their fathers or from tutors engaged specially for them.

Though a general uniformity may be traced in the elementary education of Hindus and Muslims, there were also a few distinctive features. The primary education of Hindu boys began with the worship of Sarasvatī. In Mithilā, education commenced with the ceremony called 'Aksharārambha'. The child was taught Gangāvandanā, and Guruvandanā (offering prayers to the Ganges and the Guru), and 'Ahnika Paddhati' (prayer to the Sun) and was made to memorize the *Nīti Darpana* of Chāṇakya and the *Sapta Śati* (prayer to Durgā, goddess of energy). Pāṇini's Sūtras on grammar, *Amarkośa* and *Bhaṭṭi Kāvya* formed an indispensable part of the course in the elementary education of the Brāhmaṇa boys of Mithilā. Then they took up any of the sacred texts. As for writing, Dr Keay rightly points out that in education it came before reading. In the first stage, the pupils were taught to form letters on the sand-board or on the ground with a small piece of bamboo, and next 'the tutor traced letters on the palm leaf with an iron stylus.'

In the maktab system, the child's education began with the 'Bismillah-Khani' ceremony. 'He was made to pronounce the Bismillah (I begin in the name of God) succeeded by the verses of Sura of Iqra, which were the first to be revealed to the Prophet.' He was then taught the Arabic alphabet. The Quran was the chief text-book, the whole of which they had to read without understanding it. The non-Muslim boys were first taught the alphabet and began with what was called Tashrihul-Huruf. The young scholars were also taught to form vowels and consonants, and to form syllables first on a wooden board or 'Takhti', with a thick pen, and then with a reed pen on pieces of paper. After the alphabet and simple reading and writing, the *Khaliq-i-Bari* or some dictionary of synonymous Persian and Indian words, the *Pandnāmāh* of Sadi, generally known as *Karimā*, collections of moral sayings, and *Amadnāmāh*, exhibiting the forms of conjugation of Persian verbs, were committed to memory by frequent repetitions called Amokhta. Then other subjects were taken up.

WOMEN'S EDUCATION

It is worth while concluding this sketch with what little we know about girls' education in Bihar during the period under review. Medieval Mithilā appears to have forgotten the brilliant tradition of high intellectual achievement of such great figures as Gārgī, Vāchaknavi and Maitreyī. The solitary example of Lakshima Devi may be taken as an exception. The Brāhmaṇa pandits would not

allow women 'to study the Vedas, perform sacrifices, vow or fast, apart from their husbands.' Dr. Keay has said that 'Hindu girls as a rule received no education.' He writes elsewhere, 'Early marriage had become by now the custom and usually the only education a girl received was one which fitted her to fulfil her duties in the household of her husband.' The writer of an article on 'Native Female Education' in the *Calcutta Review* (1855) opined that 'the practices of close seclusion and non-education are an innovation upon the proper Hindu system.' In spite of all this, it is difficult to believe that high-class Hindu women had no education at all. For instance, Bibi Raushan, a poetess in Persian and Urdu, learnt the Sanskrit Bhāshā from the wife of a converted pandit. It may be necessary to find some more evidence before a final verdict is given. However, we get many examples of respectable Pardanshin Muslim ladies acquiring such mastery over Persian and even Arabic and Urdu in the 18th century as to become poetesses and even authoresses of small tracts on religious subjects. Bibi Waliyā (1691), Bibi Ayeshā (1731-48), Bibi Tahirā, Bibi Sayeedā (1797), Bibi Nasibā (1797), and Bibi Raushan are some of the important educated ladies, a few of whom were authoresses.

SCIENCE

Science continued to develop during this period. A broad distinction may be made between Hindu and Muslim sciences, as was contemplated in those days.

Abul Fazal, while giving an account of the learning of the Hindus, has mentioned eighteen sciences (Athāra Vidyā) viz: (*i-iv*) the four Vedas, (*v*) the Purāṇas, (*vi*) the Dharmaśāstra (institutes of religious and secular law), (*vii*) the Śikshā, (phonetics science of letters as representing sound), (*viii*) the Kalpa (ceremonial), (*ix*) Vyākaraṇa (grammar), (*x*) Nirukta (etymology), (*xi*) Jyotisha (astronomy and astrology), (*xii*) Chhandas (prosody), (*xiii*) Mīmāṁsa (science of rites and rituals and religious action), (*xiv*) Nyāya (logic), (*xv*) Āyurveda (science of life and medicine), (*xvi*) Dhanurveda (archery), (*xvii*) Gandharvaveda (music, dance and drama), (*xviii*) Arthaśāstra (economics and politics).

Prince Dara obtained the services of learned Hindus from different parts of India (including Bihar) and pandits from Vārānasi to translate the Vedas, Upanishads, *Bhāgavadgītā*, *Jog-Vāsistha* and *Rāmāyaṇa*.

From Abul Fazal we learn that in accordance with Akbar's regulations Hindus had to study in their schools the Vyākaraṇa, Vedānta and Patañjali. These subjects were not to be neglected. One Bhavadeva Miśra of Patna wrote several works on Yoga, Vedānta and devotion during the reign of Shah Jahan. Apart from books on the humanities, several authors, especially from Mithilā, wrote on astronomy, astrology, mathematics, medicine and other sciences.

Islamic science developed as a result of a synthesis of Persian, Greek (Syro-Hellenistic), Chinese and Indian elements. They included natural history and science (treatises on animals, cattle-breeding, agriculture, plants, stores, medicine, chemistry, alchemy, and astrology), physics, and the technical arts (such as irrigation and canal construction). Besides these, there were the purely religious sciences such as theology, exegesis, metaphysics, philology, and so on. Calligraphy flourished as a necessary art.

The libraries in mosques, the khanqas and madrasas were the centres of Islamic studies, secular as well as religious. Medical science was studied in hospitals. All books dealing with science, philosophy, grammar and mathematics, not to speak of theology, were written in Arabic.

Abul Fazal makes a three-fold classification of the sciences. (*i*) The Ilahi, or divine sciences, i.e. everything connected with theology and the means of knowing God; (*ii*) The Riyazi sciences, i.e. those dealing with quantity, like mathematics, astronomy, music, mechanics and so on; (*iii*) the Tabi'i sciences, comprising the physical sciences. The educational institutions in Bihar followed the general order of science-teaching in Akbar's time.

It is interesting to find a reference to Raja Ram Narayan of Patna being called upon by Sirāj-ud-Daula to supply him with a particular astrolabe. We may mention here such great figures and versatile geniuses as Ghulam Husain, author of *Jām-i-Bahādur Khāni*, *Zich-i-Bahādur Khāni* etc., and Muzaffar Husain Azimabadi of the 18th century whose treatises on various subjects including *Reyāziat* have come down to us.

Sanskrit Literature

Though Sanskrit is often called a dead language, there has been no dearth of new books written on various subjects in many parts of the country, especially in Mithilā. Here it is intended to include roughly the works produced during the reigns of Ramabhadra

Rupanarayan and Laxminath of the Kameshwar dynasty of Darbhanga.

The first thing that strikes a student of these times is the variety of subjects on which Sanskrit books were written during the period. Mithilā has a great reputation for authors of books on Nyāya and Navya Nyāya. But including all those philosophical books and treatises on logic, we have books which can be classified under several heads. It may be enough to mention some of the authors and their works to give the reader a fair idea of the wealth of production and at times the creative activity of the Maithilis in the field of Sanskrit literature. Several of these books were written no doubt outside Mithilā and often at the instance of kings and princes beyond the borders of Mithilā. But they were all written by Maithili authors.

As very little was generally written in prose, all general literature usually went under the name of Kāvya (poetry). If the Māgadhis of South Bihar performed the function of bards, mostly in the language of the masses, many of the Sanskrit pandits of Mithilā devoted their talents to the praise of kings who patronized them and to writing inscriptions. Eulogy was the undercurrent of most of such compositions. Padmanabha Miśra who was a logician, for instance, wrote *Vīrabhadra Champu* in praise of the Baghela prince Virabhadra of Rewa. Similar was the case with Raghudeva Miśra who wrote a *Birudāvali* covering fourteen folios for the Maithili kings of the Khandavala family.

But there were other Kāvyas also written in good number, some of them of a high order. Comparatively not many have survived. A few of them are worth mentioning here.

Gangānanda Kavindra who was at the court of Karṇa of Bikaner (1506-27) composed a poem called *Bhṛingaduta* and wrote a drama called *Mandāramañjari*.

Jagannath Miśra who wrote in 1598, shows some unconventional originality by producing *Sabhātaraṅgini*, a treatise on polite conversation. It covers sixty-nine folios and may be said to give the reader an idea about 'parliamentary language' of those days.

The Kāvyamālā series of Darbhanga have published a number of poems, dramas and other compositions of this period. Two of the Maithili writers were at the court of Khatmandu (1655) and Srinagar respectively and wrote dramas and poems.

It need not be repeated here that a very large number of poets

wrote commentaries on well known Sanskrit works such as *Kumārasaṁbhava*, *Meghadūta* and *Śiśupālavadha*.

Of the works on Alaṁkāra (poetics), Chhandas (prosody), Vyākaraṇa and lexicons, the most numerous are on poetics. Some may be mentioned here as examples. *Kāvyadākini* deals with defects in compositions and is written by Gangānanda Kavindra. *Rasataraṅgini* deals with poetics in general and is illustrated by his own compositions by the poet Ramanada. Panditiaya wrote a commentary on *Kāvyaprakāśa*, a well known work on poetics. It was copied in 1641. Venidutta, Gokulnath Upadhyaya, and Chitradhara of Manganini may also be mentioned.

Vṛittasāra and *Ekāvali*, works on metrics, were written by Ramapati and Gokulnath respectively.

Among writers on grammar, most of them wrote commentaries. Giridhara Upadhyaya, however, may be mentioned here as the author of a logico-grammatical treatise called *Vibhaktyārtha-nirṇaya*.

A good commentary on *Amarakośa* is said to have been written by Chidamani during this period. *Bhagabhimārṇava Kośa* is however an original work by Paramananda.

Among the writers on music, Lochana Sharma, the author of *Rāgataraṅgini*, and Vangamani, who wrote a commentary on *Sangitachandra* of Abhilāsa, are worthy of mention here.

Jyotisa, which includes astronomy, astrology and mathematics seems to have been for centuries a favourite of Maithili writers. A long list is available of writers as well as the subjects on which they chose to write.

Some of the books written deal purely with the mathematical and scientific aspect of the movement of stars and planets. There are others which deal with the subject in relation to religious performances and rites and the advisability or otherwise of performing them when the stars are in certain positions. Maheśa Thākura (1556-69), for instance, wrote *Atichāranirṇaya* on the accelerated motions of planets and their adverse effect on the performance of religious rites; his son Paramananda, however, wrote *Siddhāntasudhā* which deals purely with astronomical calculations. Similarly Hemangada Thākura composed *Grahaṇamālā* in which he has calculated the occurrence of future eclipses for a large number of years. *Rasāla*, a work by Bharata Upadhyaya of the first half of the seventeenth century is an astro-mathematical work. We may also mention here Bhavesha's commentary on *Lilāvati* of the famous astronomer and mathematician,

Bhāskarāchārya, and *Adbhutadarpaṇa*, a book on omens and portents by Madhava Sharma.

Regarding the Vedas, Śatrughna Sharma, a Maithili at the court of Kangra, wrote *Mantrārthadīpikā* which explains Vedic mantras in connexion with Sandhyā, Śrāddha and so on.

As usual, the production of literature on Tantra Śāstra is abundant. Here only a few authors and their works can be mentioned. Devanath Thākura wrote *Mantra Kaumudi*. Narasiṁha Thākura, in addition to writing four works, wrote a readable commentary on *Ānandlahari* of Śankarāchārya. Jagadananda's *Kuladīpaka* is a good treatise which explains the principles of Tantra.

The number of books written during this period on religious and civil law, collectively called Dharmaśāstra, are numerous. One can have a fair idea of the many subjects covered by their authors, if one takes into consideration the following list, which cannot however, be exhaustive: Religious conduct and general behaviour, daily rites and special rites such as śrāddha, commentary on Śruti, Smṛiti and Purāṇa, oaths and ordeals, eating meat, obsequies, gifts, and so on.

Last but not the least, we come to authors and works on philosophy and yoga. During this period, works on all the well-known philosophies were written. Books on Nyāya, Mīmāṁsā, Yoga, Vedanta, Sāṁkhya, Vaisheshika and so on are available. But as before, Nyāya is the *forte* of Mithilā. Ruchidutta and Ramabhadra, for instance, have written several works on Nyāya and Vaisheshika. Similarly Gokulnath composed eighteen treatises on Nyāya.

But it may be observed that those mentioned above and other works also are mostly commentaries on existing masterpieces. This period, therefore, can be counted as one which was devoted more to explanation, clarification and elaboration than to new creation. The creative period probably passed away with Gangesha and others who enunciated Navya Nyāya.

Regarding Mīmāṁsā, the names of Devnath, Murari Miśra and Govinda may be mentioned.

In the field of Yoga, Bhavadeva Miśra is credited to have written an able commentary on the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali. The same author wrote a commentary on the Bhakti Sūtras of Śāndilya.

We would round off this section with the mention of an incomplete prose work by Maheśa Thākura which purports to give an account of Akbar and his successors. The formidable name of the work is *Sarvadeśa-Vṛittānta-Sangraha*.

MAITHILI LITERATURE

During the period extending from Vidyāpati (15th century) to Govindadas (17th century) Maithili literature continues to be dominated by Vidyāpati. The reason perhaps is twofold: first, the absence of any other real poetic genius and second, the comparatively unsettled social and political conditions. The recurrent Muslim invasions brought in a depression which could not easily be overcome till Maheśa Thākura was installed as king in 1556 by the Emperor Akbar.

The Maithili language, as current then, could be cultivated only as the emotional vein of personal devotion to God or as the expression of the natural feelings of love. Scholars were still devoted to Sanskrit and were not very interested in Maithili. In spite of all this, in the early 16th century we have some gems of composition, devotional in nature from the pens of Maheśa Thākura, Mahinatha Thākura and others.

Govindadas then appears on the scene. His date cannot yet be definitely fixed. We have to depend on tradition and Mithilā genealogies (the Panjis) coming down from the time of Harisiṁhadeva (14th century). According to them, Govindadas must have flourished towards the end of the 16th or the beginning of the 17th century. His favourite theme was the love of Rādhā and Kṛishṇa. This aspect of Vishṇu-Bhakti was treated by writers both scholastically and popularly. Visṇupuri's *Bhāgavata-Bhakti-Ratnākara* is a good example of the scholastic treatment. The popular way of handling the Rādhā-Kṛishṇa cult goes back to the 12th century when *Gita-Govinda* was written by Jayadeva. It was followed in Mithilā by Vidyāpati in the 14th-15th centuries. About the time of Govindadas, this was quite a popular subject with the literary artists of Mithilā. Numerous works particularly songs and dramas, were written during this period and in the periods that followed. However, Govindadas is by far the best writer. It is not known how far he was influenced by the Vaishṇava cult of Chaitanya of the 16th century. It is a fact that the cultural and social ties between Mithilā and Bengal were strong in those days. Besides the tola of Navadvipa, the Alma Mater of Chaitanya, which had been modelled on the 'Chaupari' of Mithilā, Chaitanya was indebted to Vishṇupuri and Vidyāpati for his emotional attachment to Kṛishṇa. The *Padāvali* (ed., S. K. De, Dacca 1934) of Rupa Gosvami, into which the Kṛishṇite writings of Tairbhukta Bhaktas had been incorporated, shows that the attitude towards the Kṛishṇa-cult in Mithilā and Bengal was almost the same as before.

Following the other Kṛishṇite poets, Govindadas's first concern was to appeal to the senses; and this he could accomplish with rare distinction through the musical qualities of his songs.

Side by side with Govindadas, we may also consider Ramadas, his younger brother, whose work *Ānandavijayābhidhāna* (Maheśa Jha, Raj Press, Darbhanga San, 1333 Sala) is an example of the Kṛishṇite theme in the field of drama. It is a play in four acts which tells the story of Kṛishṇa's marriage to Rādhā. The plot is simple but well planned. Besides being expert in the use of Alaṁkāra, Ramdas could at times strike a rare lyrical note. He was followed by Umapati who composed *Pārijātaharaṇa*. The chief merit of this play lies in the easy flow of the Maithili language in the songs, their sincerity of feeling and their capacity to touch the human heart.

Through Ramdas and Umapati, we have perhaps the first instance of Maithili being brought to the stage. With Umapati, we possibly come to the times of Narapati Thākura and Raghava Siṁha. Another important work is the *Rāgataraṅgini* (Raj Press, Darbhanga, Sambat, 1991) of Lochanakavi, who wrote about the time of Mahinatha Thākura, Narapati Thākura's elder brother. Lochana has referred to Mahinath Thākura and has also left a manuscript prepared in 1685. *Rāgataraṅgini*, primarily a work on music, has certain literary merits. To illustrate the Rāgas, the songs of about 40 poets, including Vidyāpati and himself, have been quoted in it. The work serves as evidence of the development of art and literature during the period from Vidyāpati to Lochana in the 17th century. Lochana himself was capable of producing fine poetry.

As a matter of fact, Maithili literature up to about the middle of the 18th century had two remarkable features: its preference for drama, and its musical qualities. The theme in most cases was the love story of Kṛishṇa; but gradually other topics, such as the marriage of Śiva and Gauri were also included. It is noteworthy that this type of literature was also carried to Nepal from Mithilā. We have a host of writers in Nepal about this time and later who attempted the Kīrtanīya dramas taken from Mithilā.

Many writers in Mithilā followed the model of Kīrtanīya drama, as laid down in the *Pārijātaharaṇa* of Umapati. Special mention may be made of Ramapati Upadhyaya, who wrote *Rukminiharaṇa*, and Lalakavi, who wrote *Gauri Svayaṁvara*.

Side by side with drama, there are also written poems, epic and lyrical. The epic, *Kṛishṇajanma* written by Manabodha about the time of

Narendra Siṁha in the 18th century, clearly shows the progress made by the Maithili language, by that time. The racy flowing language of Manabodha is as effective as it is sonorous and musical. It seems that Manabodh scrupulously avoided using 'tatsama' words while writing *Kṛishṇajanma*, and yet it is surprising that his descriptions have not suffered in lucidity or expressiveness.

HINDI LITERATURE 1526-1756

RELIGIOUS AND MYSTIC POETRY

During the medieval period, poetry was practically the only literary form, religious and secular, that developed in most of the northern and north-eastern modern Indian languages. Examples of prose-writing are rarely found. Prose had to wait till the new languages had perfected themselves in the service of poetry. Hindi was no exception, and the progress of Hindi literature during this period is mainly the progress of Hindi poetry.

For more than half the period Hindi poetry remained religious and philosophic in content and mystic in tone. At the end of the period, the sublime in Hindi poetry had already started becoming formal and divine love but thinly-veiled eroticism. While in Bihar the main currents of medieval Hindi religious and mystic poetry are clearly traceable, the degeneration into formalism and eroticism becomes manifest considerably later than elsewhere.

The main currents of medieval Hindi poetry, as exemplified in the literature of Bihar, are discussed here in brief. References to later literature are also given in order to show that the currents and trends of this period were carried over to the later period.

NIRGUNA-POETRY

Of the Nirguna saint-poets, of Bihar, Dharanidas of the village of Manjhi in the Saran district, is the earliest. He is one of the important saint-poets in Hindi taken as a whole. There is much difference of opinion regarding the date of his birth, but there is no denying the fact that he was alive in 1656. Many miracles have been ascribed to him. He is said to have written *Premprakāśa*, *Śabdaprakāśa*, *Ratnāvalī* and *Satyaprakāśa*, only the first three being available in manuscript form and only a portion of the first in print. Dharanidas was the founder of the Dharanīśvari sect which has even to-day a large number of followers in Saran and Ballia.

The remarkable characteristic of Dharanidas is that he synthesized

the theistic, non-theistic and Sūfī systems of spiritual devotion. This distinguishes his mysticism from the type of mysticism of Kabīr.

Dariyā Sahab (different from the saint, though bearing the same name from western India) occupies an equally important place among the saint-poets of Hindi. He was born in 1674 of Muslim parents in a village of Shahabad, but, as is the case with so many other medieval saints, most of his followers were Hindus. He died in 1780.

Of the twenty books that are attributed to him, *Jnāna-dipak*, *Jnāna-svarodaya*, *Dariyā-sāgar* and *Jnāna-ratna* are the important ones. Dariyā claimed to be an incarnation of Kabīr, and his philosophical outlook undeniably, closely resembles his. Dariyā, so much like Kabīr, is yet different from him in that he composed not only songs and couplets but has also a long poem, *Jnāna-ratna*, in the style of Tulsidas. As far as quantity is concerned, Dariyā has written perhaps more than any other mystic saint who ever wrote and sang in Hindi.

Rāmeśvardas is another saint-poet of the Shahabad district. He was born in 1718 and composed a *Satsai* which is not of much literary or philosophic importance.

Ramarahasya (*c.* 1774-1801), on the contrary, deserves to be better known than he actually is. Of late he has rightly been given the credit of having exalted Kabīr's sect to a philosophical and intellectual level by his writings, of which *Aksara-Khanda-Kī-ramaini* and *Panchagranthi* deserve special mention. The latter provides a detailed and logical exposition of the tenets of Kabīr's sect. Ramarahasya is admittedly one of the learned saints of Northern India.

Śivanāthdas appears to have lived in the latter half of the eighteenth century. His work, *Śivasāgara*, copied presumably by himself in 1793, has been secured in manuscript form by the Rashtrabhasha Parishad of Patna. He seems to have been a follower of the Dariyā sect. His contemporary, Ramāśramāchārya, exhibits in his work the straightforwardness and satire of Kabīr, as is evident from the very title of his work, *Asajiana-mukha-capetika*.

Mangnirama, born in *c.* 1815 in a village in the Muzaffarpur district, is said to have composed *Mangnirama-ki-sakh* and *Rama-sagara-pothi* both of considerable philosophic importance although of little literary value. Ajabdas belonged to the latter part of the eighteenth century. His work, *Brahma-aksarāvali-śabda-jhulna* deals with philosophical subjects arranged in the Devanagri alphabetical order.

The saints of the Sarabhang sect of Champaran, brought to light

only recently, may also be mentioned here for the sake of convenience, although they differ in many respects from the saints of what is broadly termed as the Nirguna-sampradāya. It has been conjectured that the sect may have been connected with Svarabhanga or Sarvanga, an ancient sage.

While the other saint-poets of Bihar clearly show the all-pervading influence of Kabīr, the followers of the Sarabhang sect, who are anything but puritanical, have a clear affinity with Tāntricism. It has also been suggested that they may be connected with the Buddhist Siddhas. The 'Gurus' of the sect are Bhikhama, Tekmanrama, Bhinakrama, Dihurama, Mangrurama, Jogesarrama and Ramsvarupdas. Ramsvarupdas published the *Bhajan-ratnamālā* of Tekmanrama; he died in 1951.

SŪFĪSTIC POETRY

Till recently Bihar was not mentioned when literary historians discussed Hindi mystic poetry written by Sufī saint-poets.

Research, still in progress, has brought to light not only some of the oldest MSS. (the earliest belonging to the 17th century) of the *Padmavat* of Jayasi, the representative Hindi Sūfī poet, but also the poetical works of other Sūfī saints, including the *Sādhan* and the *Pem-Kahāni* of an unknown saint. The importance of Bihar in the early Hindu-Muslim cultural synthesis can now be easily assessed.

KṚISHNA-POETRY

Bihar produced a number of poets who sang the deeds of Lord Kṛishṇa. Haldhardas, known also as Sur Haldhar, composed an extensive narrative poem *Sudāma-Charitra* in 1658. The poem compares favourably with the well-known Hindi narrative poem, *Sudāmā-Charita* of Narottamdas, written earlier and with the same theme. Haldhardas, a poet of no ordinary merit, also wrote *Dīnūddharana* and *Prem-rasa*.

Śaṅkaradatta, a member of the Rādhāvallabhiyā sect, is another poet of this branch of Hindi poetry. He is said to have composed *Harivaṁśa-praśasti*, *Harivaṁśa-Nāṭaka* and *Rādhikāmukha-varṇanākāvya*.

RAMA-POETRY

Rama-Poetry, a very important branch of Hindi literature in general, is no less important in Bihar. Śivadina wrote *Rāmaratnāvali*, a small and not very poetic work, in the latter half of the seventeenth

century. Baladeva Kavi, perhaps a contemporary of Śivadina, composed a long poem, *Rāmavinoda*, depicting the various episodes in the life of Rama.

Saint Surajdas, who appears to have been intimately connected with the Patna and Saran districts, wrote at the beginning of the nineteenth century. A number of manuscript copies of his work, *Rāmajanma-kathā*, are now available. The poem deals with Rama's life from the very beginning to his marriage with Sita and his return to Ayodhya.

Jivanrama 'Raghunath' wrote *Anubhava-Kalpataru* in 1828. The work consists of four parts and is composed in numerous metres and 'raginis'. The special feature of the book is its use of faultless, standard literary language, unalloyed by words from dialects.

Harasahaya Bhaṭṭa wrote *Ramaratnāvali* and *Ramarahasya* in *c.* 1828. Ramacharanadas 'Hamsakala', Śiva Prasad Kaulesar Baba are some of the other poets whose writings project Rama-Poetry in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Overawed as it were at the sublime majesty of Tulsidas, the Rama-Poets of Bihar were unable to rise to great heights as did Hindi poets elsewhere who strove to follow in the footsteps of the arch-priest.

Persian Language and Literature

The year 1526, opens a new chapter in the political and cultural history of India. Since its conquest by the Muslims it had become a centre of Persian learning. The Persian spirit manifested itself in the art, literature and culture of the country. The establishment of the Moghal Empire in India and that of the Safavids in Iran, ushered in a period which may, in all propriety, be termed the second phase of new contacts which were destined to play a very important role in all walks of Indian life. It has been very rightly said that no single race contributed so much to Islamic culture as the Persians did. The province of Bihar, too, has played an important role in the pageant of Indian literature and culture.

Bihar's important centres of learning such as Biharsharif, Maner, Rajgir, Barh and Sherghati were well known. Students and scholars flocked there from distant lands. These religious and educational institutions existed during the rule of the Sūr dynasty. The most celebrated teacher and scholar of Bihar at that time was Maulana Shamsul Haque alias Badh Haqqani Al Bihari. Shaikh Tahir of

Multan, became his disciple. There was another saint-scholar, Mulla Budh Danishmand who was held in high esteem by Sher Shah. In recognition of his abilities Sultan Salim Shah Suri appointed the Mulla as an arbitrator in the case of the apostate, Mir Syed of Jaunpur, who claimed to be the promised Mehdi. He wrote a book on Muslim jurisprudence entitled *Sharhi A'qaid-i-Qaazi*. Another literary figure is Mulla Abdur Rahim Suri at Bihari, the author of a Persian dictionary *Kashful Loghat Wal Istilahat*. It is especially intended to explain the symbolic language of the Sūfīs. Internal evidence shows that the book was written after 1619.

So far Persian was only the medium of religious teaching and the vehicle of the ecstatic expression of the Sūfīs, but it was steadily gaining ground in Bihar. It was recognized as the language of the Revenue Department by Sher Shah. The author of *Tarikh-i-Sher Shah* informs us, 'that there was appointed in every Perganā one Amir, one Shiqadar, one treasurer and one Kar-Kun to write in Hindi and one to write in Persian.' Thus Persian had now entered the field of administration, where it continued to hold sway for over two centuries.

Bihar became part of the Moghal Empire during the reign of Akbar in 1574. Patna became the seat of the Moghal governor of Bihar. The appointed governors were mostly Persians, who were followed by a train of artisans, traders, poets and literary persons who settled in various parts of the province. Patna was the meeting place of scholars and poets, and the author of the *Subha-i-Sadiq* mentions several personages who flourished at the time of Jahangir. Persian now became the recognized language of the court and of administration. Some of the governors were themselves men of great learning and ardent lovers of art and poetry.

State patronage coupled with a facility, grace and melody of the language, charmed the indigenous people, who developed through social contacts, a taste for that language. Arrangements were made to teach Persian to youths without any bias of caste or creed.

Some of the important institutions were: (*i*) The Madrasa-i-Zainabia at Phulwārisharif; (*ii*) the Madrasa-i-Saif Khan at Patna; (*iii*) the Madrasa-i-zhahbaz at Bhagalpur; (*iv*) the Madrasas at Biharsharif and Rajgir, and (*v*) the Madrasa of Badh Haqqani and Mahmud Danishmand at Barh.

Persian was the medium of instruction. Penmanship and letter-writing were highly prized accomplishments. It was the patronage

of the State and of rich men that attracted Persian poets to Bihar. Ahmad Yar Khan (takhallus 'Mujid') of Samarkand, Mirza Arif Beg of Badakhshan were the luminaries who added to the fame of Bihar.

Biharis, too, have produced works in prose and poetry which have elicited the appreciation of the Persians and Arabs. Mirza Abdul Qadir, poetically surnamed 'Bedil', in *Chahar Anasir,* mentions Mehsi and other places in North Bihar. He was well versed in theology, mathematics, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, geomancy, history and music and had learnt the whole of the *Mahābhārata* by heart. He had many Hindu and Muslim pupils. He introduced new modes in poetry and laid the foundation of a school of poetry in Azimabad (Patna). He was a Persian poet but some of his verses in Urdu have also come down to us. He has left a Persian Diwan comprising two thousand couplets. A good prose writer, his prose works consist of (a) *Muhit-i-Azam,* (b) *Chahar Anasir,* (c) *Ruqaat* and (d) *Nekat-i-Bedil.*

Moulvi Muhammad Sayeed or Sa'ad Qureshi of Azimabad was well-versed in Persian and Arabic learning. A prolific writer, he composed two Diwans, one of which bears the name Sa'ad and the other Ghalib. He has left fifty-five works. However, the following, mostly commentaries on grammars and lexicons, and on rhetoric and prosody are available in manuscript form:—(a) *Afiya Sharhe Shafiya*; (b) *Sharhe Maaqmat Hariri*; (c) *Kafiyashafia*; (d) *Qindil*; (e) *Intekhab-i-Bebadal*; (f) *Sharhe Nesab-i-Sibyam*; and (g) *Mezanul Ashaar.*

Besides great prose writers, Bihar has also produced eminent poets, the most notable being (Khwaja Amin-ud-dīn 'Amin', Karim Ali 'Bairiya', Shah Alli Akbar 'Anwar', Shaikh Md. Riza, Shaikh Md. Daem 'Bekhud', Md. Jaffar Khan 'Raghib', Khwaja Abdul (Fatah Khan 'Funnun'.)

There were also some well known Hindu poets of Persian, the most famous being Raja Ram Narayan 'Manzoon' and his brother Raja Dhiraj Narayan both pupils of the Persian poet Shaikh Ali Hazeen. Other well known poets were Basawan Rai 'Bedar', Munshi Surb Sukh 'Khakister', Lala Sobha Ram 'Danish', Bilas Rai 'Rangin', Munshi Majilis Rai, Munshi Manohar Rai, Raja Peary Lal 'Ulfati' and Lala Ujagarchand 'Ulfat'. Raja Peary Lal 'Ulfati' was a fine ghazal writer. A collection of his fifty-seven ghazals is available in manuscript form in the Bankipore Library, Patna. He also composed a mathnavi entitled '*Nairang-i-Taqdir*'.

Lala Ujagarchand, in addition to a Persian Diwan, has left two collections of letters *Inshai-i-Gharib* and *Insha-i-Ulfat*.

Apart from scholars and poets, Bihar has also produced historians. Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari, Daroga of the Faujdari Adalat of Tirhut and Hajipur wrote *Bahrul Nawwaj*, a general history of India, which is divided into nine chapters and forty-nine sections. There is another history by him called *Tarikh-i-Mozaffari*, dealing with the Timurid kings of India from their origin down to the reign of Shah Alam (1788). Ghulam Hussain wrote a history of the Muhammadans beginning from the death of Aurangzeb (1707-1781) called *Seyarul Motakharin*. The author belonged to the village of Japla. He composed another metrical history dealing with the deeds of his ancestors. Nawab Ibrahim Ali Khan wrote *Waqa-i-Marhatta*, a history of the Marathas and their wars with Ahmad Shah Abdali. The book was completed in 1786. Besides this history, he compiled three anthologies of numerous poets with biographical notes and selections from books on history, prosody, logic and medicine. Mention may be made of some eminent scholars and jurists of Bihar. Haji Ahmad Sayeed was a Persian and Arabic scholar, as well as a lawyer and theologian. He was for a long time in the service of Emperor Shah Jahan. Mulla Mohuddin, commonly known as Mulla Mohan Bihari, served for twelve years as the preceptor of Aurangzeb. Qāzī Mohibullah of Shahabad district was an eminent Ulema of his time, who was appointed Qāzī of Lucknow, and after some time, of Hyderabad by Aurangzeb. Shah Alam later raised him to the post of Chief Justice of the Moghal Empire. His *Mossalam-as-Subit*, a Hanifite treatise on Islamic jurisprudence is unique, and has been included in the course of studies of the University of Al-azhar, Cairo. His other works are *Sallam-al-ulum*, a treatise on logic and *Aljawahar-al-Fard* on the indivisible atom. Another scholar of Bihar during the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb was Maulana Shahbaz of Bhagalpur. He was an authority on Muhammadan law and tradition. Whenever there was a difference of opinion amongst scholars at Delhi regarding the interpretation of religious injunctions, the matter would be referred to him for his opinion. Five eminent jurists and lawyers of Bihar, Maulana Fasih-ud-din of Phulwārisharif, Mulla Md. Shafi and his brother-in-law, Md. Afaq of Amthua (Gaya dist.), Mir Md. Razi of Bhagalpur and another of Monghyr, figured in the syndicate constituted under Aurangzeb's orders to compile the famous book on Sunni Muhammadan Law, *Fatawai-i-Alamgiri*.

Thus, Bihar's role in the advance of Persian language and literature was by no means small. Bihar was the nursery of eminent scholars, men of letters, poets and jurists.

URDU

URDU LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN BIHAR—1526-1756

Urdu is proud of a continuous tradition in Bihar. Patna and the suburbs developed into one of the important capitals of the eastern territories of the Turks, Afghans and Moghals. Sher Shah of Bihar was crowned king of Delhi after defeating Humayun in 1540. Unlike the Deccan, Bihar continued without any break to be under the social and political influence of Delhi. It became the homeland of Sūfīs who felt at home in the atmosphere rich in mystic tradition. Many Delhi noblemen settled in Bihar and Persian poets from Delhi often visited the province. Some of them sojourned at Patna, e.g. Kalim Arif, Qazvaini, Yazdi and Ali Hazin. The Hindus and Musalmans of Bihar developed, as already noted, a taste for Persian. All these factors contributed to the formation, development and spread of the Urdu language and literature. In this connexion an important Firman of Raja Man Singh, a great noble of Akbar's court may be quoted: 'Sri Maharajadhiraj, Sri Man Singhjee nata motasaddi mahmat perganā Hajipur... Mazrua chaudah bigha Kasht Sal tamam az mauza jaroha az perganā mazkoor dar wajhe madad moash Sheikh Bakhsh ba jamaa mojavirane mazar moqarrar hai... Dakhl math karo wa... har Sal parwana talab mat karo zilhij 999 Hijri.' (*Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. 66, 1946-47). The meaning is: 'Sri Maharajadhiraj, Sri Man Singhjee orders the revenue officer of Hajipur perganā that fourteen bighas of full-year cultivated land of Jaroha village in the above-mentioned perganā are allotted to Sheikh Bakhsh and all other servants of the saint's grave in lieu of economic help... Do not occupy (the land) and do not ask for orders every year.'

Other evidence of the spread and acclimatization of Khari Boli Rekhta, is that Urdu is found in a manuscript written in Maithili script. It is a translation (1766-72) of *Surya Siddhanta* by Varahamihira made by Pandit Kamodananda Miśra. The book is on astronomy and a fragment from it reads:... Chander Kaksha ka poida ise kahte hain is men tetna rashi mizan karanis tarah se jo chalkaran maloom hua... is donon ka mizan barabar dekha... Meaning: 'It is said to be... born of Moon Zodiac... in which as much Rashi should be weighed...

The astronomical movement which is known by this method... The potency of the two was seen to be equal.

Let us now meet the medieval Urdu poets of Bihar by way of some brief quotations. Bedil Azimabadi (born 1643) says, 'Jab dil ke astan par ishque an kar pukara, parde se yar bola Bedil kahan hai ham men,' meaning: When Love called at the threshold of the heart, the beloved answered from behind the curtain that Bedil was not to be found there.

Hazrat Emad-ud-din Emad of Phulwārisharif (1654-1712), says, 'Beech nazar ke idhar oodhar hardam ave jave hai. Bal be zalim tispar tuk dekhe to tarsave hai,' meaning: He moves ever hither and thither within my sight, yet the cruel One keeps me yearning for even a momentary glance.

Hazrat Bibi Walia of Phulwārisharif (died 1726), says, 'Kaun seti tadbir bataven, un apne kan hum ko bolaven'.

(What way should I adopt, so that He may call me to His abode?)

Hazrat Shah Ayetu'lah 'Jauhari' and 'Mazaqi' of Phulwārisharif (1714-95) is an outstanding poet of the period. He composed ghazals, marsias and masnavis. He says,

Jis ka pedar kata ho na roay to kya kare ?
Tan khak men para ho na roay to keya kare ?
Piya bin hai hamari saje suni
Huay rah rah mujhe dukh dardduni
Piya ke wasl ki hun aisi bhooki,
Ke jun surak ke pechun suraj mookhi.

(My bed is lonely without my beloved. My pangs and pains increase recurringly. I am hungry for the embrace of my beloved, as the Sunflower is yearning for the Sun.)

Maharaja Ram Narayan 'Mauzoon' (died 1763) was the disciple of Ali Hazin, the famous Persian who came to India. Mauzoon composed poetry both in Persian and Urdu. Sheikh Muhammad Raushan 'Joshish' Azimabadi (1737-1801) was one of the notable poets of the age. Qāzī Abdul Waddod has very ably edited *Diwan-i-Jhoshish*. Gholam Ali 'Rasikh' Azimabadi (1748-1825) is rightly called 'Meer of Bihar'. His poetry was recognized by the great master Meer Dehlavi. He wrote ghazals and masnavis. He says,

Marna us bin ke jeete rahna,
Rasikh kaho kya qarar paya?.

To be or not to be without the beloved, tell me Rasikh, what has been decided?

Maharaja Kalyan Singh 'Ashique' (1751-1824) was the son of Maharaja Shitab Rai, Nazim of Bihar. The family patronized learning and literature. His long Urdu masnavi has been discovered recently.

Many Urdu poets came from Delhi to Bihar and settled there, e.g. Baqar Hazeen, Foghan, Hazrat Rukn-ud-din 'Ishque', Fidvi and others. Mention must also be made of some other important poets of Bihar. The literary history of the province will be incomplete without the names of Noor Muhammad 'Dildar', Hazrat Noor-ul-Haque 'Tapan', Zohoorul Haque 'Zohoor', Lala Ujagarchand 'Ulfat'. Hazrat 'Zohoor', like Hazrat Emad also produced valuable prose.

The tradition of Urdu has a continuity in Bihar. Both poetry and prose continued to be written between 1756 and 1947, and much more so after *Indian Independence.*

D. Economic Conditions

During the period under review, Bihar played a vital role in India's, nay the world's, economy. The 16th and 17th centuries constituted an important period in India's economic history. Politically the period witnessed the establishment and expansion of Moghal rule in India, on the ruins of the Delhi Sultanate. In the economic field India, for the first time, felt the impact of her closer contact with the European mercantile nations, at first the Portuguese and later the Dutch, the English, the French and the Danes.

Bihar was noted for its widespread and varied manufactures. The economic importance which Patna enjoyed in the early 16th century, rapidly grew after the headquarters of the local government was transferred from Biharsharif to Patna by the famous Sher Shah, in 1541. Forty-five years later the English traveller, Ralph Fitch (1583-91) observed: 'that the region on both sides of the Ganges from Banaras to Patna contained many fair towns, and was very fruitful.' He found Patna to be a great town with 'a trade of cotton and cloth, much sugar, very much opium' and other commodities. At the beginning of the 17th century Patna was described as a very fertile province. Sebastian Manrique (1629-43) was surprised at the 'enormous quantity and variety of merchandise in the town'. In 1632 Peter Mundy wrote that it was the greatest 'Mart' of that entire region. Thus foreign merchants in India were attracted by its fame as a 'great trading centre' of Hindustan.

The establishment of the first British factory at Patna under Robert Hughes and John Parker in 1620 for the purchase of cheap and excellent local calico and for working the raw silk of Bengal into suitable skeins, was an important phase in England's 'Quest of Eastern Trade' and synchronised with the setting up of English factories in other parts of India. Thus, apart from Surat and Masulipatam, 'the permanent footholds for English commerce in India', factories were started in Ahmedabad, Cambay, Baroda, Broach and other places in Gujarat, as well as at Agra, with sub-factories in 1620 at Lahore and Samana. Almost all these places were either important centres for the production of calico or for its bleaching and distribution. Patna, too, occupied an important position among these places.

The Commercial Mission to Patna (1620-1) mentioned above, however, was a failure. The next attempt under Peter Mundy was made in 1632. With the restoration of political order in England under Cromwell after the Civil War, fresh attempts were to 'extend and improve' the English Company's trade in Orissa and Bengal by profitable investments, especially in saltpetre, silk and sugar.

In the middle of the 17th century, saltpetre was in great demand in Europe as the principal ingredient of gunpowder. In 1651 the English Company set up a factory at Hugli and a trading agency at Patna. In 1657, a permanent factory was established here by the English and it was placed under the Bengal Agency. Other factories in Bengal were at Balasore and Kasimbazar. The trade position of the English at Patna was improved by Job Charnock, the able chief of the Patna factory (1664-80). His vigorous superintendence largely accounted for the development of the saltpetre trade of the English.

The industries of Bihar during this period may be broadly classified into the following categories: Agricultural products; Forest products; Animal husbandry; Dairy industries; Mines and Minerals; Textile manufactures; and Handicrafts.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE

Agriculture was then, as now, the principal occupation of Bihar. Abul Fazal found agriculture flourishing 'in high degree' in Bihar. Patna was so fertile as to be able to supply grain to other provinces and even to foreign countries. Rice, wheat, sugar-cane and cotton were the main products. Patna rice was rarely equalled in quality. Even today, Patna rice has a reputation in European countries.

'Shāli' rice was well known from ancient times for its taste and good quality.

Bengal also sent wheat and rice to the Delhi and Agra regions. Sugar of high quality was manufactured in abundance in Bihar, and also exported. Ralph Fitch found that Patna sugar was carried to Bengal and western India. In the days of Tavernier there was 'a great traffic' in moist sugar (molasses) at Patna, Hugli, Dacca and other places.

Barley was cultivated at Patna but it was 'very scarce'. Pān (betel leaf), especially the 'maghi' variety, delicate and beautiful in colour, thin in texture, flawless, without cracks (be-jarm) fragrant and pleasant to taste, was even then grown in Bihar.

Fruits were grown 'in great plenty'. Sarkar Hajipur was noted for its abundance of kathal (jack-fruit) and barhal. The former used to 'attain such a size that a man can with difficulty carry one.' Grapes were also grown in Hajipur. In Sarkar Tirhut delightful orchards of orange trees used to extend for a distance of 30 miles. 'Tut', a sort of mulberry, was grown at Rajmahal. Bhagalpur and its environs extending up to Barari had an abundance of 'toddy' (palm) trees and mango groves. Patna produced 'ananas' akin to the pineapple and melon, pleasant to the taste and with an apricot flavour.

Among spices, long pepper grew wild in the forests of Champaran. Ginger was also produced in Patna.

Among narcotics there was a considerable opium trade in Patna during the reign of Akbar, which continued throughout the 17th century and John Marshall, the Balasore factor, was of the opinion that the best opium came from near Patna while that from Monghyr was not so good.

Medicinal drug were required by the surgeons of Fort St. George in the seventies of the 17th century, especially turmeric and tincall (tinkal, native borax), which were procured from the hilly regions north-west of Patna.

FOREST PRODUCTS

Abul Fazal speaks of forests along the south banks of the Gogra. The sub-montane forests extended much further into U.P. and Bihar than they do now. Lignum aloe (aguru) was available in large quantities at Patna. The price of the lightest and commonest kind ranged from eight annas to four or five rupees a seer. Fifty maunds of gumlac were purchased by the Patna factors (1620-1) for Persia,

the Red Sea and England. Spikenard, an aromatic oil or balsam yielded by a plant, was brought down to Patna in winter from the 'north country'. Besides musk brought to Patna from Bhutan and Nepal, musk from the two-foot high musk-deer of the locality was available at Patna. It was exported in large quantities by the English and Dutch and was passed off as China musk by the merchants. Good elephants were procurable in plenty in Bihar. Elephant tusks, three yards long and half a yard wide cost fifty-five to sixty rupees a maund.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Bihar produced a fine species of goat of the Barbary breed, which was castrated. Such goats were so fat that they were unable to walk and had to be carried in litters. The price per head of the first quality of Barbary goat was only one rupee, and of the second, twelve annas. The buffaloes of Tirhut were so savage that they would attack a tiger. There was in Patna a small breed of oxen (gaina) which drew small coaches. The best of such oxen could be purchased for four or five rupees a pair. Horses (ponies) for riding were small, strong and nimble, some of them costing as much as 45 rupees, a very high price for a country pony. The cattle of Purnea formed an important item of livestock and were sent to Bengal as carriage bullocks.

DAIRY INDUSTRIES

Milk was described by Abul Fazal as 'rich in quality and cheap'. Tirhut was especially famous for its curds which used to keep for a long time without becoming sour. Milk sold for 25 dams (10 as.) a maund and curd for 18 dams (7 as.) a maund.

MINES AND MINERALS

Gold was worked, for Ralph Fitch states that at Patna people tried to collect grains of gold by digging deep pits at particular sites and washing the earth from them in big bowls.

Diamond-mining was carried on in the seventeenth century. Immediately north of Bihar in the sub-Himalayan tract (now in Purnea district) there was a region called Gokra-desh, famous in Jahangir's time for its valuable diamond mines, but all trace of these mines was lost after 1612. Ibrahim Khan Fateh-Jang, the governor of Bihar, sent Emperor Jahangir nine diamonds collected from the

State mine and the zamindars of Bihar. One of these diamonds weighed 14½ 'tanks' and was valued at Rs 100,000. Tavernier refers to diamond-mining at Soumelpour in the Lohardaga (now Ranchi) district of Chotanagpur, where diamonds were found in the sands of the river Koel.

Saltpetre is used extensively as an ingredient of gunpowder, in aniline dyes, for medicinal and antiseptic purposes, as a preservative for fish and meat, as manure, and also for cooling purposes and in glass-making, bleaching, washing etc. In the writings of European travellers, merchants, agents and others of the 17th century, we do not, however, come across any reference to all these specific uses of saltpetre, (carried in the form of ballast for ships) except as an ingredient for gunpowder and for cooling purposes. To ascertain the origin of the trade in saltpetre for the making of gunpowder, we have to turn to the military history of Europe. Earlier it was used only as 'kintledge' or ballast in ships by the English and the Dutch, though this was obviously a secondary and incidental use. Apart from this export, India herself used saltpetre in the 16th and 17th centuries, as a refrigerant for cooling drinking water and soft drinks, and for manufacturing gunpowder and other explosives, and fireworks.

Deposits of saltpetre existed in different districts of the Indo-Gangetic tracts, especially Patna, Gaya, Tirhut, Saran, and Champaran, but curiously enough, Bihar, came to prominence as a producer only in the second half of the 17th century. During the British period, the importance of other centres diminished and Patna was acknowledged as the best for procuring saltpetre. Bernier wrote: 'Bengal is the principal emporium for saltpetre. A prodigious quantity is imported from Patna. It is carried down the Ganges with great facility and the Dutch and the English send large cargoes to many parts of the Indies and to Europe.' Manucci, too, remarked about Patna that it had 'the materials for a great quantity of saltpetre which is carried by the Europeans to Europe,' and again that 'European and other (Asiatic) traders carry away great quantities of saltpetre.' Hence it is not surprising that the English, French, Dutch and Portuguese looked upon Patna as an important centre and established factories there.

If Patna was the principal centre for the supply of saltpetre from the neighbouring areas, Hugli, Balasore and Pipli were the chief ports of export. The whole amount of saltpetre collected at Patna was

sent to Hugli in large, flat-bottomed and exceedingly strong vessels called 'Patellas', each carrying 4,000-6,000 Bengal maunds.

The saltpetre of Bihar was cheap and of the best quality. In 1650 it cost at Patna only Re 1 a maund and at Hugli Rs 1/12/- including customs and freight charges. At Balasore it was Rs 2/10/- a maund.

TEXTILE MANUFACTURES

A. Cotton Manufacture and Trade

Patna had a flourishing trade in cotton and silk goods. Cloth generally called 'ambertees' (inferior kind of cloth) and calicoes of narrow width were bought cheaply and in large quantities at Patna by British traders. The English considered these in 1620-21 to be stouter than Dariabadi (white cotton cloth of Dariyabad in Barabanki district), Khirabadi (that of Khairabad in Sitapur district) and Semianos (a fine cloth of Samana in Patiala State), but they were unbleached and narrow in width. Besides these, there were three better species of 'ambatis' 'razais' (a thick-woven wrapper about Rs 2/- a piece), 'Zafar khani' (Rs 1½-Rs 6/- a piece, in no way inferior to the baftas of Broach), and 'Jahangiris' (the broadest and finest cloth at Patna, Rs 3-Rs 12 a piece).

Other varieties of calico, such as Sahan, Hammam, Chautaha, Ravat, Ramsukha, Cassa, and Dupattas both fine and coarse, were available in the neighbourhood of Patna. Fine Cassa calico called 'muslin' was imported from Dacca. The localities round Patna, within a radius of nearly 50 miles, were important centres and markets of cotton manufactures. In the neighbourhood of Patna, every village and town was a centre of cloth production. In the time of Shah Jahan cotton was grown in the area between Naubatpur and Patna.

Cotton manufactures flourished in the time of Manucci (1653-1708). He observed that 'fine white cloth' was manufactured at Patna and was 'very plentiful' in the province of Bihar. Thus very fine cotton fabrics, both white and coloured, were produced in Bihar for internal use and export.

B. Silk Manufacture

Patna was famous also as an important centre of silk trade. It was a market for silk, skein (yarn) and manufactures, imported from different parts of Bengal (especially Murshidabad and Saidabad) and Orissa.

Raw silk which was considered the best variety of unwound silk of 'serbandy' (i.e. cocoons) was imported into Patna in large quantities from Murshidabad and Saidabad in Bengal. Early in the 17th century, Patna yielded annually 1,000 to 2,000 maunds of raw silk.

Baikunthpur, ten miles east of Patna, was an important silk manufacturing centre, producing quantities of 'alachaah', 'layches' and 'tuckrees' or 'becutpoores' (both for women's petticoats). These were generally purchased for Persia by Moghal traders and were considered by the English factors (1620-1) as likely to command a market in England.

Imported silk manufactures were available at Patna. Satgaon quilts and Tasar silk goods came from Lower Bengal. Some of these quilts were considered 'the most pleasing to Englishmen' but the trade was based on factors other than the demand in England. From Maldah came three varieties of silk goods and from Sherpur in Bogra district, a thin variety of coloured silk cloth. From Orissa there came to Patna varieties of linen called Ambarees and Charkhanahs, chequered muslins striped with white silk. The best silk goods available at Patna were the Curtabees or Aghabanees, embroidered with silk, silver, and gold floral designs.

In the sixties and seventies of the 17th century, Patna imported: (*a*) from Kassimbazar, sundry sorts of raw and wrought silk, fine shashes (turban cloth) and strips interwoven with gold and silver; (*b*) from Hugli and Balasore, sana (or salu, a cheap fine cloth, generally red), ginghams (an old English term for a cotton stuff woven with dyed cotton yarn), oramalls (rumals, handkerchiefs), and cotton yarn; and (*c*) shawls:—The Moghal Emperors attempted to introduce the shawl industry into Patna besides Agra and Lahore.

HANDICRAFTS

Rajgir was a centre of paper manufacture. Near that city and near Gaya there were quarries of stone resembling marble from which ornaments were made. Precious stones were brought to Gaya from foreign ports and there was a continuous trade in them. The black stone 'masnad' of the Nawab Nazim of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, was built at Monghyr by Khwaja Nagar of Bokhara in 1643.

Abul Fazal observed that boats were available in plenty. At Rajmahal port Manrique found over 2,000 boats assembled from the surrounding districts. There were various types of boats which were utilized for war and trade. Daūd Khan Quraishi, governor of Bihar

(1659-63), during Mir Jumla's war with Shuja, purchased several boats (kisti or ghurab) from local 'majhis' (boatmen). He equipped them with artillery and gunners and crossed the Ganges on a bridge of boats. Usually saltpetre was transported from Patna down to Hugli, Balasore and Pipli in various types of country-craft known as Pattellas, Boras, Purgoes, Palwars and others. Sloops and pinnaces, maintained by the English and Dutch companies, were also used.

The Venetian traveller, Manucci found Patna to be a centre for the manufacture of bottles and fine earthen pottery, including 'cups of clay finer than glass, lighter than paper and highly scented.' The earthenware manufactures in general emitted 'a pleasant odour' and were 'so fine' that they were not 'thicker than paper'. Such articles were used not only by nobles, but were also sent to the courts as 'a rarity' and 'carried all over the world' as curios. Minapore, near Hajipur, was a pottery centre.

Abul Fazal states that gilt glass was manufactured in Bihar. Tipperah merchants purchased at Patna tortoise-shell and sea-shell bracelets as well as other toys, besides coral and amber goods.

John Marshall found Bhagalpur to be a market of bows and arrows and also 'neat hubble bubbles' (huqqah). He found Catchagola near Gharaghat a market for 'lathis', but these were not as good as the lathis of Patna.

It is thus clear that Patna in the 17th century was not only a centre of inter-provincial trade, but of international trade, Asiatic, African and European. It was connected with Agra, Allahabad and Banaras on the west by river and land routes and with the general system of overland traffic to Central Asia, West Asia and Africa, including Egypt. It lay on the road from Agra to Chatgoan, the port of Bengal, and was connected with other ports of Bengal, such as Tanga (in Gour), Hugli, Kassimbazar and others. It also traded with Orissa, including Puri and Balasore. Patna was, as Bowrey observed, 'a country of very great Trafficks and Commerce, and is really the great Gate that openeth into Bengal and Orissa, and consequently into most parts of India, viz. from the Northern Kingdom or Empires (by land), namely Persia, Carmania (Kirman), Georgia, Tartaria, and so on.'

Patna's industries and trade made it an important meeting-place of merchants of different nationalities for whose convenience there was a cosmopolitan 'sarai' (Saif Khan's Sarai). In this sarai, rooms were hired for monthly rent, whereas the sarais in big towns usually

accommodated travellers only for a night. The records of the first half of the 17th century refer to Portuguese, English, 'Mogoles' (Moghals, i.e. Persians, Central Asiatic foreigners and N.W. Frontier merchants), Pathan, Armenian and Indian merchants including East Bengal traders (Praychas). The earliest English factors at Patna found that the Portuguese were already in possession of the field. Every year their frigates came from Malacca and Cochin to their two ports, Hugli and Pipli, where they had been licensed by Jahangir to reside, and thence to Patna, laden with tin, spices, and China ware, finally returning with ambati (calicoes,) cassa (muslin), all kinds of fine cloth (specially dyed red for sale in the south), silk, and coarse Jaunpur carpets. It took five or six days to return from Patna, and about double the time to get there. This trade must have been badly affected by their expulsion from Bengal in *c.* 1632.

The Pathan (Afghan) traders brought Sahans from Lower Bengal. It was at this time too that the Armenians penetrated into the interior of India. The Dutch factor Pelsaert (1620-6) noticed Armenian merchants at Lahore together with Aleppo merchants, while the English traveller Peter Mundy found Armenians at Patna in 1632. Manucci, the Venetian, saw at Patna an Armenian friend of his, Cojah Safar (Khwaja Safar) of Agra. Armenian merchants and others who travelled in the countries from Tartary to China and carried on the musk trade, annually passed through Patna on the way to Hugli. Tavernier met four Armenian merchants from Danzig at Patna who were going to Bhutan to sell yellow amber images. Thus medieval Bihar constituted a link in India's economic and commercial contacts with the three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe.

References to guilds are very scanty, but there is no doubt that there were guilds and professional castes of artisans. Abul Fazal writes: 'Of every guild of artisans, he (the Kotwal) should name one as guildmaster, and another as broker by whose intelligence the business of purchase and sale should be conducted.' Dr Alexander Hamilton Buchanan's accounts of Patna, Gaya, Bhagalpur and Shahabad refer to various classes of workers and artisans which presupposes the continuation of the older guilds.

The reformed coinage of Sher Shah lasted throughout the Moghal period, was maintained by the British Company and remains the basis of the existing Indian currency. He checked the progressive deterioration of the past and reconstructed the currency on a most comprehensive basis, sweeping away the old mixed-metal coinage

and other anomalies and struck well-executed pieces in gold, silver and copper, of a fixed standard of weight and fineness. His coins were square and circular in shape. Pure gold coins weighed 167 grs., 168·5 grs. and 166·4 grs.; his silver coins weighed 180 grs., and contained 175 grs. of pure silver; half-rupees weighed 88 grs.; copper 'dams' varied in weight between 311 grs. and 322 grs. The rate of exchange between copper and silver was 64:1. The king's name was inscribed both in Persian and in the Nagri script. Sasaram (Shergarh) was one of his mint towns.

In 1577-8, Akbar reorganized the mint and placed the five principal provincial mints under the highest imperial officials, the Patna mint being entrusted to the care of Asaf Khan II. Akbar's gold and silver coins were excellent and were distinguished for their 'purity of metal, fullness of weight, and artistic execution'.

Under Akbar, the 'dam', 'paisa' or 'fulus', was a big copper coin, modelled on Sher Shah's pieces, but normally weighing 323·5 grs. The normal copper-to-silver ratio was 72·4 to 1, 40 copper 'dams' equalling one silver rupee of 172·5 grains. The dam was divided into 25 'jitals' for accounting, but there was no actual 'jital' in circulation. Cowries were used as subsidiary coinage.

Landlords and officials as well as city-dwellers could, for obvious reasons, maintain a high standard of living. The Court and the highest officials set the pace and all tried to attain the same level. This kind of life deteriorated into a decadent, luxurious and easy-going style of living. At the same time, it was the Court and these upper classes that had both the taste and the means to patronize literature and the fine arts.

The standard of living of the common people during the period has sometimes been described as being on the same level as today. But one favourable factor was the extraordinary cheapness of food. Nevertheless, adverse conditions also existed. Labour suffered mainly from two hardships, low wages, and the oppression of officers who had a tendency to impose forced labour.

The peasants were comparatively happy though in times of scarcity they were the worst hit.

The artisans could rarely rise to a social status higher than their own, for they all followed hereditary crafts. Nevertheless the patronage of a few rich nobles sometimes tended to better their lot. On the whole, life seemed to flow smoothly and this explains the continuity of artistic production as well as the variety of handicrafts that

flourished in spite of political upheavals and changes in administration.

The chewing of pān was a common luxury indulged in by rich and poor alike.

The huts of the poorer people were low, built generally of mud and thatched or covered with khaprail (earthen tiles). Even in the midst of poverty, the people enjoyed their simple surroundings and the occasional festivals, melas and religious ceremonies.

E. Fine Arts

It is unfortunate that no notable sculpture or painting of the period has survived, except the very stray instances that one comes across while studying some of the great architectural structures. Later, however, Patna became the centre of a pictorial style known as the Patna Kalam (brush) (Pl. XXXII- Figs. 68 & 69). Though it is somewhat significant from the point of view of Bihar, it cannot be said to have made any mark on the history of Indian art.

The story of Muslim architecture in Bihar reaches a distinctive phase with Sher Shah Suri's rise to power. 'A man of marked constructional propensities and architectural ideals' as Percy Brown calls him, he has left his impress on the architecture of his time. He arrived on the scene at a time when Islamic architecture in India, particularly the imperial style of Delhi, was already in a state of disintegration. Only an intelligent patron with aesthetic vision could save this style from utter dissolution. Sher Shah, gifted with the necessary imagination and outlook, was fully aware of the needs of the time, and his building projects, each of exceptional order, introduce a new era in the history of Indo-Muslim architecture.

Sher Shah's buildings may be divided into two distinct groups of monuments, situated far apart, one at Sasaram in Bihar, the scene of his early career, and the other at Delhi, the seat of his imperial government. Stylistically the two groups are clearly distinguished, one the brilliant culmination of an earlier tradition and the other anticipating notable future developments. In the history of Indo-Muslim architecture Sher Shah's buildings supply a link between the earlier Indo-Islamic style as practised under the aegis of the Delhi Sultans, and the later, Moghal style. It is the first group of Sher Shah's buildings that is relevant to the history of Bihar.

At Sasaram and its neighbourhood there is a series of mausoleums, the majority being erected in all probability during the lifetime of Sher

Shah. Each of these is a building of noble proportions with a marked architectural character. Two of these are outstanding: the tomb of Hasan Khan Sur (Pl. XVIII-Fig. 45) father of Sher Shah, and that of Sher Shah himself (Pl. XVII-Fig. 42). Both are octagonal in plan, following the tradition of funerary buildings started at Delhi in the tomb of Khani-i-Jahan Tilangani during the reign of Fīruz Shah Tughluq. The design became popular during the régime of the Saiyads and the Lodīs who seem to have adopted it as the usual pattern for royal mausoleums. Sher Shah apparently received the idea of such a mausoleum from the imperial metropolis. It is from the same source again, that he procured an architect, Aliwal Khan.

Among the buildings planned by Sher Shah, the first to be completed was the tomb of his father, Hasan Khan Sur. Far away from the source of its inspiration, this initial attempt in the metropolitan style does not seem to have been a success. Like many monuments of the same order, the mausoleum is situated within a walled enclosure with imposing portals, one on each side, and domed turrets, one at each corner. It is an octagonal building rising in three diminishing stages —the mortuary chamber octagonal in shape and enclosed by a corridor of similar design, an octagonal drum projecting above the roof of the corridor and, supported by it, the high dome with its conical finial. The surrounding corridor has three arched openings on each of its eight sides and is covered by a series of twenty-four shallow domes, three on each side, supported by transverse arches spanning the arcade. All around, this lowest stage is shaded by a projecting eave (chajjā) above which appears a low battlemented parapet. The small domes roofing the corridor project their heads behind the parapet. The octagonal drum, also terminating in a similar parapet, is otherwise bare. The dome is surrounded at its base by kiosks, one at each of the eight corners, and terminates in a small dome-shaped apex over a bell-shaped cushion resting on an out-spread lotus base, the whole having a conical finial.

Viewed from the outside, the mausoleum is rather dull and bare, but the interior seems originally to have been sumptuously treated. The soffits of the arches and domes of the corridor still bear traces of elaborate ornamentation in stucco. Similar ornamentation also appears on the springing of the principal dome and its soffit. Beautifully lettered Quranic verses and floral and geometric designs form the chief ornamental patterns which, besides being picked out in stucco, were further emphasized by the use of various colours.

In Bihar the tomb of Hasan Khan Sur certainly represents a noble conception. Compared to the earlier Muslim monuments in this region, it reveals a freshness and vitality of form and composition. Nevertheless, it also shows a number of flaws, which appear all the more glaring in view of the masterly creation that stands in the neighbourhood, the tomb of Sher Shah himself.

In view of what was to follow, this initial attempt, in spite of its faults, was not without certain significance. The next monument in this style, the grand mausoleum of Sher Shah, far excels all its compeers, not excluding those at Delhi where the style originated. For its bold and imaginative conception and superb rendering Sher Shah's tomb has justly been regarded as the *magnum opus* of the style representing a supreme creation of extraordinary architectural interest. As has been said, the octagonal type of funerary monuments initiated at Delhi was characteristic of the imperial style of the Saiyad and the Lodi rulers. It is not a little surprising, therefore, that its most magnificent expression should be found in a remote corner of Bihar far away from the imperial capital. Sher Shah's tomb was, no doubt, based on the Delhi prototypes, but such prototypes belonged to a ruling power already approaching disintegration. The tomb of Sher Shah is a production on a much higher aesthetic plane and is a fitting tribute to the power and imagination of his vigorous and dynamic personality.

Not a little of the romantic beauty of this grand mausoleum is due to its picturesque situation. It stands in the middle of a large quadrangular tank, approximately 1,400 feet square. From the centre of this tank rises the ponderous structure in five gradually diminishing stages, 'solid and stable in itself yet apparently floating on the face of the water, its reflections creating an illusion of movement and at the same time duplicating its bulk.' A bridge across the water, now ruined, connected the mausoleum with the land on the northern side, access to the bridge being obtained through a square domed porch. Of the five diminishing stages of the monument the lowest two, each square in shape, constitute the foundation of this massive structure. Directly from the water rises a stepped basement from which flights of stairs in the middle of each side lead up to the second terrace. The fault in the orientation of the basement has been corrected by placing the upper terrace obliquely on the lower and in a manner that suits the breadth and scale of the ponderous structure. The upper terrace, with octagonal domed pavilions at the corners, arched passages

in the middle communicating with the basement and projected balconies in between carried on massive brackets, is itself nobly designed. From the centre of this ample court rises the octagonal mausoleum in three gracefully diminishing stages ultimately crowned by a low wide dome of hemispherical design. The lowest stage forms an arcaded corridor, 135 feet in diameter, round the funerary hall, pleasing in appearance with an elegantly shaped range of arches, three on each of its eight sides, the projected eave supported on brackets and the high crenellated parapet screening the shallow domes covering the corridor. The total height from base to finial is 150 feet and offers a splendid harmony with the dimensions of the base.

The octagonal mortuary chamber is a little over 71 feet in diameter and is approached by arched doorways, one on each side except the west which has a richly decorated mihrab instead. In the interior, the transition from the octagon to the sextadecagon is effected by corbelling, and by a similar process to the polygon of 32 sides and finally to the sphere. The sextadecagonal section is pierced by window openings, screened by perforated grills of various patterns, and the polygon is relieved by arched recesses, one on each side. From the floor to the vaulted ceiling the height is nearly 100 feet, the dome itself having a diameter of 71 feet at its base.

The monument is made of fine Chunar sandstone and now presents a grey and sombre appearance. There are sufficient traces, however, of glazed and painted ornamentation to indicate that originally the building was intended to have a rich and sumptuous colour effect in keeping with its vast scale. The shimmering waters of the tank once reflected a monument glowing in colour with its grand dome glistening white against a blue sky.

The mausoleum of Sher Shah has been described as being thoroughly expressive of Indian architectural genius. In its stage-by-stage elevation Havell recognizes the working of a mind saturated with Hindu ideals. While there may be differences of opinion in this regard, there can be no doubt that the design was largely influenced by Hindu traditions. The use of brackets, corbels and architraves in so prominent a fashion fully bears this out.

Sher Shah's tomb at Sasaram is certainly the most outstanding of its kind in India. The stream of humanity has drifted away from near the place and few get the opportunity of visiting it. But one who cares to do so cannot help but be impressed by the noble and stupendous

monument in its remarkable setting. Nobody can deny the bold and imaginative character of its conception, the majesty of its proportions and the magnificence of its execution. The transition from the square to the octagon and from the octagon to the sphere is smooth as well as harmonious and the manner in which the enormous mass has been broken up by the application of appropriate architectural details has been admirable. Few buildings, if any, of this same order can surpass it in the chaste beauty of its line, in the dignified harmony of its different elements, and in the effective distribution of its huge bulk. It represents a great architectural conception and a supreme building achievement of sober and massive dignity. 'India boasts of several mausoleums of more than ordinary splendour; the Taj at Agra in some of its aspects is unrivalled; over Adil Shah's remains at Bijapur spreads a dome of stupendous proportions, but Sher Shah's island tomb at Sasaram, grey and brooding, is perhaps the most impressive of them all.' (Cambridge History of India).

The mausoleum of Islam Shah, son and successor of Sher Shah, was planned on much the same lines as that of his father, but on a larger scale. This ambitious project, however, remained unfinished. The tomb of Bakhtiyār Khan, a noble of Sher Shah's court, at Chainpur is also based on the model of the Suri tombs at Sasaram.

The tomb of Aliwal Khan, the architect of the Suri tombs, at Sasaram is, however, of a different conception. Aliwal Khan's remains lie buried in a grave open to the sky and situated within an enclosed court with gateways in the middle of the east, north and south sides. Built of finely chiselled sandstone the monument is significant for its chaste and elegantly carved ornamentation.

There can be no doubt that with the rise of Sher Shah there begins a period of unprecedented architectural activity in Bihar. The fort of Shergarh near Sasaram, as its name implies, was evidently built in his time. It occupies a plateau, about four miles in circumference, protected at the edge by battlemented walls with substantial bastioned gateways. Inside, on an eminence was situated the palace with its own enclosing walls and was approached by gateways at intervals. The palace was divided into a number of courts with public and private apartments. There are also the remains of underground chambers within the area. In spite of the ruined state of the buildings it is not impossible to recognize in Shergarh some sort of a prelude to Sher Shah's more ambitious project, the Purana Quila at Delhi.

The fort of Rohtas was intimately linked with the history of Sher

Shah and was an important base of operations in his rising career. The history of the fort goes back to pre-Muslim times and it was from a Hindu chieftain that Sher is known to have seized it in 1538. The fort continued to be occupied long after Sher Shah had ceased to reign and the majority of the buildings that may now claim any architectural character date from the time of Akbar. Only one building within the fort, the Jami Masjid, can be definitely dated in the period of Sher Shah. Built in 1543 by one Haibat Khan, it is an elegant three-domed building of white sandstone. The Jami Masjid at Rohtas, though it cannot claim the grandeur of Sher Shah's own monuments, is yet distinguished by a solemn reserve and chaste dignity. The refreshing vigour that characterizes Sher Shah's buildings is immanent in this comparatively modest structure.

During the time of Sher Shah, Muslim architecture in Bihar achieved all-India distinction. In the subsequent period, while the impetus still remained, the architecture itself sank again to a provincial level. A few buildings, erected during the time of Akbar, are, however, ot more than ordinary interest. Of these the Palace in the Rohtas fort, (Pl. XIX-Fig. 46) completed in 1597, is typical of the Akbari style, but only in a provincial manner. There is epigraphic evidence associating the name of the celebrated Rajput chief, Man Singh, with the erection of the different components of the Palace scheme, and it is quite possible to infer that fundamentally the scheme owned its conception to this Kachachhwa prince who was for some time the governor of the province.

The Palace court faces west, the high enclosing wall on that side being broken by an immense gateway, the Hathia Pol, and relieved by several projecting balconies irregularly spaced. The gateway, situated near the southern end, consists of an arched passage with an arched window above, both enclosed by a bigger archway flanked on either side by a projected balcony. The balcony is supported by heavy brackets, with a deep niche below containing the sculptured figure of an elephant. It is from this last feature that the gateway derives its name. Divided into more than one storey inside, the gateway serves as an effective entrance to the inner court of the Palace.

Another notable building is the Phul Mahal or Palace of Flowers, which stands on a lofty terrace accommodating underground chambers. The Phul Mahal itself is a building of noble proportions and consists of a spacious rectangular hall with two pillared galleries

at the front and back. The walls, both inside and out, have recessed niches, and are ornamented with painted geometrical and floral patterns, vase motifs, and so on. Such decorations, which apparently gave the building the name, Phul Mahal, have mostly vanished. In the centre of the hall there was an ornamental reservoir with a water jet, but this has also gone. From the sumptuous character of the original, the building appears to represent an important conception in the scheme of the Palace and a suggestion has been made that it once served as the office of Man Singh and perhaps also as the hall of private audience.

The Durbar or the government's audience chamber, situated a little to the north of the Hathia Pol, seems to have been the most ambitious structure within the Palace court. It is a fine four-storeyed building, the lowest of which consists of a spacious gallery with a long rectangular hall and a dark chamber behind it on the west, and a series of rooms on the north. The second storey consists, again, of a fine open gallery with a spacious hall behind, known locally as the Takht Badshahi or the Throne Room. The walls of the gallery and the Throne Room in the second storey and the soffit of the domed chamber in the third contain traces of painted decorations in red, yellow and blue. The exquisitely ornamented brackets add to the richness of the composition, and everything is in good taste. The building, on the whole, has a chaste and sober dignity.

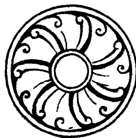
The tomb of Makhdum Shah Daulat at Maner (Patna district) (Pl. XVII-Fig. 41) is most striking and distinguished by an elegance of design and neatness of execution. It stands in the middle of a large quadrangle enclosed by a brick wall with a dodecagonal bastion of tapering outline rising in two storeys at each of the four corners. On the south, the wall is further strengthened by two extra bastions of the same shape. Only a few of these bastions have been preserved.

The mausoleum in Chunar sandstone rests on a raised terrace and consists of a square domed chamber enclosed all around by a continuous gallery. The facade on each side has an open pillared section in the middle flanked by an arcaded one at either end. Tall, slender pillars carry brackets supporting the architrave above, which runs into a wide sloping eave, resting again on brackets of identical design, all around the building.

The walls of the mortuary chamber are relieved by arched doorways, fretted windows and recessed niches, all harmoniously disposed.

The entire *ensemble* of the exterior is charmingly designed. Makhdum Shah Daulat died in 1608 but his tomb was completed in 1616. It may be recognized as one of the outstanding erections of its class in the whole of India. Such a high achievement is, however, very rare in this part of India. Few buildings of any noticeable architectural merit were produced in the subsequent phase.

Of the Hindu temples erected during the period, few remain. The most common type, seen frequently in North Bihar and in the region round about Gaya, shows a square sanctum, occasionally surrounded by an open corridor, surmounted by a straight-edged tapering tower with clusters of miniature replicas attached on all sides. Within the Rohtas fort there are two temples rather interesting in design. One is the Harischandra temple, probably built by Raja Man Singh, which consists of a small square sanctum surrounded by an open pillared verandah. The sanctum is covered by an octagonal ribbed dome which has on four sides four smaller domes of similar design. The walls of the sanctum are relieved by recessed niches. The pillars have square bases and octagonal shafts ending in brackets supporting the wide sloping eave running all around. Over the eave rise battlemented parapets and the entire conception has a sober elegance of rare occurrence. The Ganeśa temple, also probably of the same date, consists of a small square sanctum preceded by a mandapa, the two being raised over a substantial terrace. Only the pillars of the mandapa now remain. The sanctum is covered by a curvilinear sikhara with attached miniatures round its body. The temple is interesting for it represents the survival of a pre-Muslim architectural style.



XVII

POLITICAL HISTORY OF BIHAR FROM 1757

THE seeds of British political supremacy in India were sown on the fertile soil of Bengal and Bihar as a result of the mid-eighteenth century political upheavals. Before that, from the 17th century, Bihar's contact with European nations was mainly commercial because of her economic importance. Bihar was a centre of trade for cotton cloth, silk goods, opium, sugar and, most important of all, for saltpetre, which was used as a principal ingredient in the manufacture of gunpowder. It was mostly from Bihar that European trading companies exported this article in large quantities. Attracted by the advantages of trade, European companies established their factories here. After several attempts from 1620, the English East India Company established a factory at Patna in 1657-8. The Dutch too established a settlement here. Tavernier, who stayed at Patna for eight days (21st to 28th December 1665), writes: 'The Dutch Company has an establishment there on account of trade in saltpetre which it refines at a large village called Chapra, situated on the left bank of the Ganges 10 kos above Patna.' No definite information is available yet about the exact date of the foundation of the French factory at Patna. The Danes started a factory there in 1774-5.

Though the various European powers that entered India came at first as traders and adventurers, their ambitions were gradually aroused when they saw that conditions in India were favourable for establishing political power. In the race that followed, the British won and others were eliminated for different reasons. But the question remains as to how it was that comparatively very small powers with headquarters thousands of miles away, and people entirely different in race, religion, language and outlook could

conquer the whole of India and establish an empire that lived for more than a century. It can easily be discerned that it was the manifold weakness of India and the Indian people that brought slavery to this country more than merely the strength of the conquerors. This subject requires far deeper study than is possible here. All that is being done in this place is to indicate a few points.

The first and foremost weakness was perhaps that among politicians and thinkers of those times, there was a deplorable want of feeling of oneness about India as a whole. Each king or prince thought of his dynasty or province or empire but not of India or India's interests as a single political entity. The second serious weakness was that people thought more in terms of religion, community and caste than in terms of territorial interests and integrity. Then there was a serious lack of political sense. So much so, that the kings and emperors seem to have had little realization of what they were really losing politically in allying themselves with the British for their own selfish purposes. There was very little realization that the Europeans were naval powers and that they had set out on adventures in India on the strength of their navies. No serious attempt was made by Indians to build a strong navy in order to fight and weaken the Europeans on the seas. The Britishers were superior in arms as well as military discipline. Indians were brave enough but bravery alone is not sufficient where firearms come into play and where teamwork and group action are necessary and effective. Indians failed also to keep pace with Europe in science and technology. All these weaknesses led to political chaos and lack of any central direction from the point of view of India as a nation. The decay of Moghal power added to the whole confusion.

Taking advantage of political disorders and the confusion in India consequent on the steady decline of the Moghal empire, the European trading companies jumped into the field of Indian politics. Relations between the English and French were also considerably influenced by their Seven Years' War in Europe. Determined to eliminate French influence, the English captured Chandernagore, 'a rich and thriving colony of the French', and their most important settlement in Bengal, in the third week of March 1757. In the middle of the next month, Nawab Siraj-ud-daula was compelled, under pressure of circumstances, to commit the fatal mistake of asking M. Law, Chief of the French factory at Kassimbazar, to quit Bengal. Leaving Murshidabad on 16 April, Law proceeded leisurely till

he reached Bhagalpur on 2 May and Patna on 3 June 1757. 'There,' as he himself writes, 'the French were received with every appearance of friendship by Ram Narayan, Governor of the Province, and given very agreeable sites to build their barracks.'

By this time, Mīr Jāfar and other enemies of Siraj-ud-daula had formed a conspiracy against him with the English, and relentless fate drove the Nawab to the tragedy of Plassey on 23 June 1757. From the lost field of Plassey, the Nawab fled to his capital. Finding no possibility of defence in the midst of utter confusion, he went by road to Bhagwangola on the Padma, and there taking a boat, he proceeded upstream with the hope of joining his French allies under M. Jean Law in Bihar, where the Deputy Governor 'was a faithful adherent to his family.' But he was captured near Rajmahal and immediately sent by the Governor of that place to Murshidabad, where he was brutally murdered on 2 July under the orders of Miran, son of Mīr Jāfar.

The battle of Plassey indeed marks a decisive step in the history of British political supremacy in India. But in Bihar its Deputy Governor, Raja Ram Narayan, and some others like Kamgar Khan, the Muhammadan Zamindar of Narhat Samai (lying south-east of Zillah Bihar, partly in Patna district and partly in Gaya district), Sundar Singh, the Bhumihar Zamindar of Tikari, Pahalwan Singh of Bhojpur (Shahabad district) and Bishun Singh of Siris Kutumba (Gaya district) were not easily and immediately reconciled to the new change effected by it. Ram Narayan's fidelity to the family of Siraj-ud-daula is well known from unimpeachable evidence.

But Ram Narayan could not take a bold stand against the conspirators. In a few months he had to reckon with accomplished facts and to accept the new régime probably out of selfish considerations. He was a victim of intrigues engineered by Md. Amin Khan, step-brother of Alivardi and brother of Mīr Jāfar's first wife, and by Mīr Md. Kazim, the elder brother of Mīr Jāfar and then a Bakhsh (Paymaster of forces) of Ram Narayan. Ram Narayan received assurances of 'safety and favour' from Clive and so the new Nawab had to abandon his hostile designs against him. Reconciliation between Ram Narayan and the new government of Bengal was effected through a formal process. Clive and Mīr Jāfar came to Bihar with contingents of troops. During their stay at Patna, a 'darbar' was held there on 23 February 1758, which was attended by Clive and most of the local English officers and

agents. On this occasion, Mīr Jāfar formally nominated Miran as Governor of Bihar with Raja Ram Narayan as his Deputy. The appointment of Miran 'was merely nominal, not derogating from the authority of Ram Narayan, who continued to be responsible to the Nabab (Nawab) alone, but rendering him (Miran) liable to some additional presents.'

Clive also managed to secure at that time a very important commercial advantage for the English Company by persuading the Nawab to grant them the monopoly of the saltpetre trade in Bihar. The protest of the Dutch proved to be of no avail. Clive further announced the organization of a third battalion of sepoys raised chiefly from the Bhojpur area and in a few weeks he enlisted 1,000 'fine athletic' men.

It became impossible for Mīr Jāfar to establish a stable administration. In fact, confusion and disorder reigned all round. The Shahzada Ali Gauhar, who had proclaimed himself Emperor under the title of Shah Alam II in December 1759, on hearing the news of his father's murder at Delhi, invaded Bihar three times, in 1759, 1760 and 1761. He was joined by M. Jean Law and his men and also by Bihar Zamindars like Pahalwan Singh and Kamgar Khan. One of his partisans, Khadim Husain, the usurper of Purnea, whose relations with Miran were not at all cordial, advanced up to Hajipur but was defeated there by Captain Knox on 19 June 1760. The Emperor Shah Alam then left Bihar after this, his second invasion.

Before he invaded Bihar again the next year, another change had taken place in the government of Bengal. Mīr Jāfar was paid back in his own coin by being deposed from the 'masnad' of Bengal at the instigation of Holwell, the acting Governor of the Company in Bengal (after the departure of Clive in February 1760, and till the arrival of Vansittart in July 1760), 'in breach of a treaty founded on most solemn oaths.' His son, Miran, had already been killed by lightning which struck his camp near Bettiah on the night of 22 July 1760. His dead body was taken to Patna and thence to Rajmahal, where it was buried at Sharifa-bazar.

On the removal of Mīr Jāfar from the masnad, his son-in-law, Mīr Qasim, was made Nawab of Bengal in October 1760. Early in 1761, Shah Alam II invaded Bihar for the third time. But it ended after the defeat of his forces by Col. Carnac on 15 January 1761 at the village of Suan (six miles west of Bihar city). On 6 February Shah Alam II was taken prisoner and escorted by Carnac from

Gaya to Patna, where he was lodged in the fort and began to hold court. Here Mīr Qasim waited upon him and got royal confirmation of his Subedarship which he had gained by the favour of the English. The English thus cleverly managed to secure the consent of the Emperor to what they had accomplished in Bengal and Bihar. It was but an exploitation of the fiction of sovereignty of Shah Alam II. Col. Carnac aptly observed in his letter to the Select Committee in Calcutta dated 6 March 1761, that 'the unhappy Prince is reduced so low, as to be much more an object of pity than of fear.'

Mīr Qasim wanted to be a real ruler, not a mere figurehead with the power of the English supporting his throne. He rightly felt that there were three essential requisites for this: improvement of the government's financial condition, effective reorganization of the army and suppression of such members of the aristocracy as were not easily amenable to governmental control. To achieve the first object he compelled some of the old officers to pay off the arrears due from them and to disgorge the amounts found to have been misappropriated by them from government funds. Even Ram Narayan was not spared.

With a view to strengthening the army, Mīr Qasim placed the Armenian, Gurgin Khan, in charge of the military department and ordered him to reorganize it on the model of European armies. He admitted English sepoys and their officers into his service and 'made a vast quantity of firelocks or artillery.' He arranged the manufacture of flint muskets and guns at Monghyr, which was then a very important centre for such works (even now there are some small factories). He shifted the headquarters of his government from Murshidabad to Monghyr, probably because of its strategic position, being situated on the main line of communication between Bengal and Bihar. He strengthened the fortifications of that city and improved it in other ways too.

Mīr Qasim had already taken steps to reduce the power of the defiant zamindars of Bihar, particularly those of Bhojpur who had been traditionally inclined to oppose the ruling powers, and some others of the frontier districts of Bihar. One day he issued an order summoning the more important zamindars to attend his court. Buniad Singh and Fateh Singh obeyed but were put in prison when they came to Patna. Kamgar Khan paid no heed to his summons and retired with his troops into the hills of Ramgarh; Bishun Singh

of Siris and Kutumba fled to Banaras. To warn and chastise the Bhojpur zamindars the Nawab sent an advance party under Raushan Ali Khan, a trusted officer, and Somru, the German adventurer. Early in November 1761, he himself left Patna for Shahabad with a large force. On his approach, Pahalwan Singh and some other zamindars of Shahabad crossed the Ganges and took shelter at Ghazipur in the territory of Raja Bulwant Singh, zamindar of Banaras. The Nawab established his full control over the Shahabad area and appointed his own officers for its administration. Pursuing his general policy of establishing control over the frontier areas of Bihar, Mīr Qasim also led an expedition against the Raja of Bettiah who had shown an attitude of defiance. The Raja was subdued and his fortress captured early in March 1762.

Mīr Qasim's relations with the English did not remain cordial for long. A clash between the two became inevitable, particularly in view of the uncompromising attitude of the majority of the members of the Council in Calcutta, regarding the Nawab's legitimate efforts to put an end to the abuses of dastaks by the Company's servants in their private trade. These abuses had increased rapidly and had seriously prejudiced the interests of indigenous merchants of the province and of the government exchequer. Mīr Qasim was perfectly justified in trying to remove these. But those English officers who derived benefit through private trade were prompted by self-interest to wrongly base their claim on Farrukhsiyar's firman of 1716-17, which had granted exemption from payment of duties on exports and imports of the East India Company and not on those of its servants. Negotiations carried on by Hastings and Vansittart failed, and soon the issue led to a trial of strength. The outbreak of an actual conflict was precipitated by the insolent and overbearing conduct of some of the Company's officers, particularly Mr Ellis, Chief of the English factory at Patna. He sought to flout the Nawab's authority and 'make him lose in respect and honour in the eyes of the people.'

When Hastings met the Nawab, the latter repudiated any feeling of unfriendliness towards the English on his part, and strongly complained of 'acts of violence committed by Mr Ellis before his face; insults on his people and the disturbances raised in the country.' 'My authority,' he said, 'has been rendered contemptible to all Hindusthan and my government in Bihar has been sadly obstructed.' As a well-meaning man, Vansittart made another effort at reconciliation, and taking Hastings with him, he met the Nawab at

Monghyr on 30 October 1762. They came to an agreement on certain terms regarding the private trade of the Company's servants. But these were not accepted by the other members of the Council who continued to press their unreasonable demands, making all compromise impossible. The situation became inflammable and after minor affrays and disturbances at some places, there began soon enough an open rupture between the Nawab and the English; and Mīr Jāfar was re-installed as the Nawab of Bengal on 10 July 1763.

In contests with the English, Mīr Qasim did not receive the hearty co-operation of all his men, and his cause was, therefore, doomed to failure. On hearing of the victory of the English at Udainala (near Rajmahal) on 5 September 1763, Mīr Qasim retreated from Champanagar near Bhagalpur, where he had gone a few days before, to Monghyr. After a short stay at Monghyr, he left for Patna sending in advance the English prisoners who were in the fort. Flushed with their victory at Udainala, the English army under Major Adams, accompanied by Mīr Jāfar, reached Monghyr on 1 October 1763, and assaulted the fort there. The governor of the fort capitulated after a short siege. The 'possession of Monghyr,' as Broome rightly points out, 'was of importance to the English.' The Nawab in despair and fury ordered the massacre of the English prisoners at Patna, whose exact number cannot be definitely noted as some accounts have given exaggerated figures. Women and children were spared.

Leaving Monghyr on 15 October, the English army under Major Adams and Major Knox, reached Patna on the 28th of that month and stormed the fort on 6 November. Fortune thus turned against Mīr Qasim. Confounded at the desertion and treachery of his own men and finding it no longer possible to resist his enemies, he left Bihar for Oudh.

Mīr Qasim made another determined attempt to recover his lost throne and province. He managed to secure the alliance of Emperor Shah Alam II and Nawab Shuja-ud-daula of Oudh by paying them ten and seventeen lacs of rupees respectively and proceeded towards Bihar with his allies and a party of adventurous Frenchmen. The first half of 1764 was spent in indecisive engagements on the borders of Oudh and Bihar. Major Hector Munro, who was in command took stern measures to restore discipline in the English army and make it strong enough to fight at that critical moment. The two armies then met at Buxar on 23 October 1764. The

result was the crushing defeat of Shuja-ud-daula whose army finally collapsed at Kora on 3 May 1765. Shah Alam II, who had been insulted by Shuja-ud-daula before the battle of Buxar, went over to the camp of the English. Mīr Qasim, deserted by his friends, stripped of all his jewels and unable to make further attempts to regain his lost position, led a wandering life till he died in poverty at Delhi in 1777. 'Thus ended,' remarks Broome, 'the famous battle of Buxar, on which depended the fate of India, and which was as gallantly disputed as it was important in its results.' The verdict of the battle of Buxar was, in a sense, more decisive than that of Plassey. If Plassey saw the defeat of the Nawab of Bengal, Buxar proclaimed the defeat of the great power of Oudh and the submission of the Delhi Emperor. As Mr. Ramsay Muir remarks, 'Buxar finally riveted the shackles of the Company's rule upon Bengal,' and, one may add, upon India.

After their victory at Buxar, the English attacked the fortress of Chunar, which stood in a strategic position. The garrison there bravely defended themselves against the British assaults, but ultimately the fortress was surrendered to the English by its custodian Shah Mal who, like many others of those days, did not hesitate to barter away the country's interests for his own gain. Mīr Jāfar, who had accompanied the British army to Patna, before proceeding to Karmanāśa, appointed his brother, Mīr Muhammad Kazim Khan as Deputy Governor of Bihar and 'left Raja Dhiraj Narayan, (brother of Raja Ram Narayan) with him as his Diwan.' Dhiraj Narayan remained Diwan for two years, from November 1763 to September 1765. Mīr Jāfar died in February 1765 and was succeeded by Najm-ud-daula.

After the battle of Buxar, Shah Alam II opened negotiations with the English for a settlement. The English wanted to utilize him as a convenient tool and sought to find means for his maintenance out of the dominions of Shuja-ud-daula. The final settlement was effected by Lord Clive, who came to Calcutta on 3 May 1765, as Governor of the English Company and President of the Committee. On 9 August, Clive met the Emperor at Allahabad and entered into an agreement with him. He was given the districts of Kora and Allahabad and was assured of an annual tribute from Bengal of 26 lacs of rupees (two lacs of which were reserved for Mīrza Najaf Khan). In return for all this, the Emperor by a firman dated 12 August 1765 (with an addition on 19 August) granted to the

English East India Company the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. This arrangement was highly significant, for it meant that the English were legally entitled to all the revenues of these three subahs after paying 26 lacs of rupees to the Emperor, the expenses for Bengal's administration and about 53 lacs of rupees for the Nawab's maintenance. Both the Emperor and the Nawab of Bengal became virtually pensioners of the English Company, who became the *de facto* masters of these subahs. What sword and intrigue had secured for the English was legalized by a grant from the helpless Emperor. Already by a treaty, concluded on 20 February 1765, the new Nawab of Bengal had surrendered to the English his control over the army and officers of the government and 'a mere outward show of independence was left to him.'

The East India Company thus became the virtual masters of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Yet from certain considerations, Clive did not assume direct responsibility of their administration but left it to the Nawab.

The country was already in a state of disorder and confusion. In Bihar the new officers failed to restore administrative order and the various cross-currents in politics continued. The chief of the English Factory at Patna, Mr William Billiers (who succeeded Mr Ellis), did not act with any sense of responsibility though his influence and the importance of his position had increased after the recent political changes. Weakness and inefficiency on the one hand and selfishness and greed on the other naturally produced gross administrative abuses. 'I shall only say,' observed Clive, 'that such a scene of anarchy, confusion, bribery and corruption and extortion was never seen or heard of in any country but Bengal. Nor have such and so many fortunes been acquired in so unjust and rapacious a manner. The three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa producing a clear revenue of £3,000,000 sterling, have been under the absolute management of the Company's servants, ever since Mīr Jāfar's restoration to the Subedarship; and they have, both civil and military, exacted and levied contributions from every man of power and consequence, from the Nawab down to the lowest zamindar.'

Soon after, a change was effected in the government of Bihar. During his stay at Patna, Clive dismissed and pensioned off (in September 1765) Mīr Muhamad Kazim and put Dhiraj Narayan in his place. Raja Shitab Rai was associated with him as Diwan.

Early in 1766 a Council of three was appointed, consisting of Dhiraj Narayan, Shitab Rai and Samuel Middleton, who had succeeded Billiers as chief of the Factory at Patna. Mr Middleton exercised enormous power of general superintendence over administration. He used to occupy the 'state chair' in front of a big masnad, spread on the ground for the occasion, with Dhiraj Narayan seated on a cushion on one side and Shitab Rai on the other. It was in this way that the business of administration was carried on.

Dhiraj Narayan was not an efficient administrator. He could not cope with the difficulties of the disturbed situation and was embarrassed by the clamour of troops over the non-payment of their arrears. His troubles were enhanced by conflicting instructions from the English, and also by the machinations engineered chiefly by Shitab Rai who cunningly ingratiated himself into Clive's favour. Murli Dhar, who had been sent from Calcutta to take charge of certain departments including the Intelligence Department and to assist Raja Dhiraj Narayan, turned out to be a traitor and betrayed his secrets to Shitab Rai, who formed a rival party in the government against Dhiraj Narayan. When Clive was at Patna in 1766, Shitab Rai suggested to him a plan of sending Muhammad Reza Khan, the naib Nazim of Bengal, to Patna to inquire into the revenue affairs of Bihar. After Muhammad Reza Khan's investigation, Raja Dhiraj Narayan was dismissed from office (September 1766) and Raja Shitab Rai was made naib Nazim of Bihar. His place as agent of the Emperor was taken by Munir-ud-daula, founder of the Bhiknapahari Nawab family.

The defence of the north-west frontier of Bihar engaged the serious attention of the English, particularly in view of a fresh Maratha bid for power in the north and fear of the Abdali raids. Hearing of a mutiny of European troops at Monghyr, Lord Clive arrived there on 15 May 1766 and after suppressing it came on to Patna. He then proceeded to Chapra in north Bihar, where he held a 'Congress' which was attended by Shuja-ud-daula and the envoys of the Emperor, the Jat Raja and the Rohilla Chiefs. A 'treaty was entered into between these parties for mutual defence against any aggression' of the Marathas. In September 1766, Colonel Smith was posted at Sasaram to observe and report on the movements of the Marathas and to keep watch over the roads and passes in Bihar. Colonel Barker was ordered to proceed to the banks of the Karmanāśa with instructions to cross the river if necessary. 'Bihar thus formed

the watch tower of the English' during this period of turmoil in northern India. But the Company's troops then stationed in Bihar oppressed the common people in various ways. There was a garrison at Monghyr, a brigade at Patna and a battalion on the Karmanāśa, besides the perganā sepoys. Mr Harwood, the Supervisor of Bhagalpur and Rajmahal, complained against 'the acts whereby the troops and the camp-followers usually oppressed the inhabitants' and was told in reply that the 'troops should be ordered not to do so.' But this did not produce any effect, for the commanders of battalions continued to issue parwanahs and send sepoys to collect grain for the troops.

Within the province of Bihar itself, as in Bengal, the dyarchy of Clive, because of its inherent drawbacks, made confusion worse confounded. Lack of governance, administrative disorder, social insecurity, economic decline, abuses of private trade by the Company's servants and oppressive revenue collections reduced the country to a pathetic condition, the seriousness of which was enhanced under Clive's two successors as Governors of Bengal, Mr Verelst and Mr Cartier. Richard Becher, an experienced servant of the Company in Bengal wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors on 24 May 1769: 'It must give pain to an Englishman to have reason to think that since the accession of the Company to the Diwani, the condition of the people of this country has been worse than it was before; and yet I am afraid the fact is undoubted . . . this fine country which flourished under the most despotic and arbitrary government, is verging towards its ruin . . . .'

Nature also became cruel in these years of maladministration. The terrible famine of 1769-70 caused untold misery and distress to the people, thousands of whom perished through starvation and lack of adequate relief measures on the part of the government. 'To judge from the city of Patna,' wrote Alexander in January 1770, 'the interior of the country must be in a deplorable condition. From forty to sixty have died every day for these ten days past.' In April affairs became worse still. Alexander then reported that 'the depopulation of the interior part of the country is more rapid than will be imagined by any person who has not been witness to it.' 'By this time,' he further wrote, 'the miseries of the poor increased in such a manner that no less than 150 have died in a day at Patna.' A letter from Bengal to the Court of Directors, dated 9 May 1770 recorded: 'In the famine which has ensued, the mortality

and the beggary exceed all description. About one-third of the inhabitants have perished in the plentiful province of Purnea, and in other parts the misery is equal.' Mr Ducarel, Supervisor of Purnea, reported on 28 April 1770: 'Purnea, which was once a plentiful country, retains now nothing but the name of its former abundance. The distress of the poor is now beyond description, hardly a day passes over without 30 or 40 people dying.' He again wrote: 'The Gunge, called Allumgunge,...has declined greatly by reason of the considerable decrease of inhabitants during the last famine, a great part of the town having become a jungle, and literally a refuge for wild beasts.' The stings of this appalling tragedy were aggravated by the mismanagement of administration and selfish behaviour of the English servants of the Company who, as the Court of Directors wrote on 28 August 1771 'turned the public distress into a source of private profit.' The Court added: 'As part of the charge sets forth that the ryots were compelled to sell their rice to these monopolizing Europeans, we have reason to suspect that they could be no other than persons of some rank in our services; otherwise, we apprehend that they would not have presumed of having influence, sufficient to prevent an enquiry into their proceedings.'

A change was introduced in the system of administration in 1770, and a Provincial Council was appointed for Bihar. It consisted of James Alexander as President, and Robert Palk and George Vansittart as members along with Raja Shitab Rai. The Council was to control revenue. Eager to conciliate the new members of the Council, Shitab Rai proceeded up to Fatwah to meet them, returning with Vansittart on his own elephant.

In view of the Maratha advance into the north and also the movements of the Rohillas and Sikhs, the Company's government continued to be anxious about the effective protection of the north-west frontier of their dominions. The Chief at Patna was constantly instructed to be on his guard 'lest he was caught napping.' He was asked to keep an eye on the two servants of Shuja-ud-daula, stationed at Patna, to watch the movements of different powers in northern India and to report these to the proper authorities to afford all facilities to troops going from one part of the province to another or across the Bihar border into Shuja-ud-daula's territory.

James Alexander was transferred to Murshidabad in 1771 and Richard Barwell, son of William Barwell, a former Chief of Patna, succeeded him as President of the Council of Revenue at Patna.

George Vansittart succeeded Barwell as President of the Council in 1772. Next year Vansittart was succeeded by Thomas Lane, who remained at Patna till 1775 when Philip Milner Dacres relieved him. On the expiry of the five-year revenue farming in 1776, Isaac Sage took over charge of revenue collection. Sage was succeeded as President of the Council in 1777 by Ewan Law and remained in that post till 1780 when he returned to England. After the abolition of the Patna Council of Revenue, along with the other Provincial Councils, in 1781, William Maxwell, seniormost member of the Patna Council after the departure of Law, became the Revenue Chief of Bihar.

A change had already been introduced in the Company's administration in Bengal. The Court of Directors in their letter of 28 August 1771 announced their momentous decision 'to stand forth as the Diwan.' Warren Hastings, who became Governor of Bengal in 1772, was given to understand that he was 'to assume openly the management of Dewanee (Diwani) without any foreign intervention.' He was armed 'with full powers to effect a complete reformation' of the evils of dual government. Accordingly he sought to introduce reforms in the various branches of administration which, being supplemented by the more comprehensive reforms of Cornwallis, laid the foundation of the Indo-British administrative system in this country.

Shitab Rai was suspended on charges of corruption, misappropriation of government money and mismanagement during the famine and sent under arrest to Calcutta to answer for them. He however, emerged from the enquiry with honour. As Hunter says, 'the investigation was a public *amende* for his apprehension rather than a trial.' He was reinstated in his office, but soon fell seriously ill, so that when Hastings on his arrival at Patna wanted to take him to Banaras he could not accompany the governor. He, however, presented to the governor his son Kalyan Singh, an accomplished scholar and poet, and requested him to consider him as his successor in all his offices and to extend to him similar favours as he had been shown. Shitab Rai soon died and Hastings, on his return to Patna in September 1773, appointed his son, Kalyan Singh, Diwan on an annual salary of fifty thousand rupees. But Hastings did not grant Kalyan Singh the allowance of three lacs which his father had received for nizamat and left the general civil administration in charge of the Council. Soon after, Hastings appointed Kheyali Ram and Sadhu Ram as Naib Diwans under Kalyan Singh.

On the abolition of the Revenue Council of Bihar in 1781, revenue farming for Bihar was entrusted to Kalyan Singh, who divided it with his Naib Kheyali Ram. For various reasons revenue collections fell short of the stipulated instalments and by the end of the year 1781 Kheyali Ram was thrown into prison for being in arrears. On account of the occasional obstructions of revenue chiefs, Kalyan Singh also could not successfully collect the revenues in the perganās entrusted to him. One estate after another was taken away from him and placed under direct management, until Shore came to Patna in 1783 and made a new settlement. After some vicissitudes of fortune Kalyan Singh died at Calcutta in 1822.

The administration of Warren Hastings was marked by vigorous efforts on his part to consolidate the power of the East India Company in different parts of Bihar and to counteract the various forces opposed to it. Efforts were made by the Company's government to bring under their control the hillmen of the Rajmahal Hills in the Jugletterry (Jungle tarai), who defied its authority and were, as was observed by James Stuart, judge of the Banaras division in 1808, in 'open arms against Government.' What the hillmen then did was the result of their reaction against the sudden imposition of foreign rule which sought to enter into the secluded regions of the hills. The area then stretched from the Rajmahal Hills in the east to beyond the river Barakar as far as Ramgarh in the west, and from Colgong in the north to the frontier of Panchet in the south. Jagannath Deo, chief of Lakshmipur and one of the principal zamindars of this area, who had originally been a vassal of the Kharagpur Raja but had made himself independent after the defeat and captivity of the Raja of Kharagpur at the hands of Mīr Qasim, raised a levy of hillmen. He strengthened the defences of Tiur Hill (Trikut Parbat) about ten miles east of Baidyanathdham (Deoghar) by means of fortification. The detachments sent against Jagannath Deo could not subdue him. Once the Collector of Monghyr 'taking the field with a small detachment in hopes of awing him to obedience was obliged to return after having been fired upon.'

The area of the Jugletterry was, no doubt, in a state of disorder during that period. Captain Browne, writing in 1778, reports that confusion had increased after 1769-70, when 'the famine swept away numbers of the (zamindari) chowkies lying between the hills and the cultivated parts of the country, which had till then 'kept things within bounds.' Acting on the suggestion of his military

adviser, General Barker, Warren Hastings appointed Captain Brooke Military Governor of the disturbed area with a special Light Infantry Corps of 800 men. As ordered by Hastings, Captain Brooke combined repression with pacification. By several expeditions and stratagems lasting for more than a year, he subdued the zamindars and hill-chiefs who had challenged the authority of the new administration. He stormed Jagannath Deo's fort at Tiur but the chief escaped into the hills. By his considerate treatment of prisoners, Brooke managed to conciliate them and encouraged their settlement in villages. He claimed to have founded in the course of a year 283 villages in the area extending from Udainala, about six miles south of Rajmahal, to Barkop in the Godda subdivision. Hastings exultingly reported to the Court of Directors that the Jugletterry tract 'has been reduced to government.' But his optimism was rather premature. It took many more years to bring the hilly tract of this part of Bihar under effective control of the new government, whose predecessors, the Moghals, had not been successful here. The work begun by Captain Brooke was continued by his successor, Captain James Browne, till 1778 and carried further by Augustus Cleveland who, being previously stationed at Rajmahal as Assistant to the Collector, had been transferred to Bhagalpur in 1776. He was an able administrator, and before his death at the age of twenty-nine on 13 January 1784, he succeeded in bringing the Paharias under more control than before by combining firmness with conciliation through various means, including payment of stipends to the Paharia sardars, ryots, and manjhis. To enforce authority he raised a force of hillmen called the Bhagalpur Hill Rangers with the concurrence of Sir Eyre Coote, Commander of the British forces in Bengal, who had recently passed through Bhagalpur on his way up country.

Some of the hillmen 'resenting the part that their fellow tribesmen were playing as treachery to the common brotherhood,' sought to chastise the other faction and organized a raid. They had the sympathy of Rup Narayan, Zamindar of Chandwa, and of Sarbeswari, Rani of Sultanbad. This raid was ruthlessly suppressed, one hundred and ninety-five persons being arrested. One of them was a sardar, Bidji of Titoria by name, and seventy-four were manjhis. Sardar Bidji and Chondra of Pupet were hanged. But the problem of the Hill area was not yet satisfactorily solved.

Resistance to the Company's authority was also offered during these years by a class of people described in the Company's records and

other accounts as 'Sannyasi raiders', who organized themselves into bands and moved from place to place harassing the new alien administration. It may not be quite correct to class them as 'lawless banditti' (bandits). Further studies might reveal that the causes of their movements were rooted in the changed government and the changing conditions of the period. Anyway, their widespread activities caused anxiety to the Company. The Chief of Patna wrote in 1767: 'A body of 5,000 Sinnasees [Sannyasis] entered the Sirkar Sarouge (Saran); the Phousdar (Faujdar) sent two companies of sepoys after them, under the command of a sergeant who came up with them; the Sinnasees stood their ground and after the sepoys had fired away part of their ammunition fell on them, killed and wounded near eighty and put the rest to flight.' The Chief of Patna sent Captain Wilding to 'rid the country of them.' The Purnea area was frequently subject to the incursions of the Sannyasis, who came from Dinajpur, Rangpur and Maldah. Being apprehensive of these, Mr Ducarel, the Supervisor at Purnea, stationed in 1770 'harcaras (spies) at the Ghats and passages of the Kossy (Kosi) river.' In 1773 a party of Sannyasis sought to force their way into Bengal through Purnea. On the requisition of local officers, Captain Brooke and his troops, who had to make a temporary diversion from their operations in the Jugletterry reached there, but they 'escaped', wrote Captain Browne, 'with the loss of a few of their stragglers whom he took prisoners.' On their westward march, the Sannyasis went to Champaran and Saran. On the request of the Superintendent of sarkar Saran, Captain Hay, with four companies of sepoys, marched from Patna on 13 April 1773, to join the detachment at Bettiah to chastise the Sannyasis. The result of their pursuit is not known. Movements of the Sannyasis and the Fakirs continued for a few years more till they were fully suppressed. They were reported to be in Purnea in 1795.

The insurrection of Raja Chait Singh of Banaras had repercussions on the adjoining province of Bihar. Some of the Bihar zamindars, discontented with the English Company, rose against it and supported the cause of Chait Singh. On 29 August 1781, Mr Charles Graeme, the Collector of Saran, wrote to Mr Ross, the Revenue Chief at Patna, 'Reza Cooly Cawn (Kuli Khan), formerly the āmil of Sasaram, is at this time with Raja Cheyt Singh. Many of the inhabitants of that district, and probably Oojains, a tribe of Rajpoots, are sincerely attached to him. Petambar Singh, of the family of the Ticcari (Tikari) Raja, is most intimately connected with Cheyt

Singh, and his dependents are remarkably good soldiers. He has also a number of horsemen in his pay.' It is stated in a letter of Mr Ross to Major Hardy, commanding the Patna Militia, dated 6 October 1781, that 'one Fateh Shah (Fateh Sahi of Hathwa) was giving trouble in Saran at this period, while several zamindars and others in the jurisdiction of the Revenue Chief of Patna armed and clothed their dependants in the military accoutrements of the Company.' Narayan Singh, zamindar of Siris and Kutumba (in Gaya district), also then resisted the march of the Company's troops near Ramnagar, at the foot of the Sasaram hills. He was arrested for this and sent as a state prisoner to Dacca on 5 March 1786. He was allowed to return to his zamindari in 1792 when it was settled on him under the Decennial Settlement Regulations; but his zamindari was sold at the end of the eighteenth century for arrears of revenue. Raja Akbar (or Akbal) Ali Khan of Narhat and Samai (in Gaya district) also rose against the Company at this time. He went to Karakdiha where he tried to raise the Ghatwals against the British. After some time he escaped to Delhi. He met Hastings at Banaras in 1784 and was permitted to return to Bihar, but he could not re-establish his position.

The years 1778-83 were a very critical period in the history of the rising British Empire in different quarters. England was then confronted not only with the revolt of the American Colonies but also with a formidable coalition of her foes in Europe. These events undoubtedly had significant repercussions on contemporary Indian politics. The attempt of the French to fish in the troubled waters of India through their friendship with Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan of Mysore, the most inveterate foes of the British in India, made the situation here also extremely critical. British reprisals were, therefore, directed against hostile powers in all theatres of their activities, including India. On the outbreak of war between England and France in March 1778, the French settlements in Bengal and Bihar were captured by the English. In the autumn of 1780 the United Netherlands (Holland) joined the league against England in the course of the American War of Independence. This was followed by a declaration of war by England against the Dutch on 20 December 1780 and the capture of their settlements in India in 1781 by the English. The respective possessions of these powers in India were restored to them only on the termination of the war.

Though there was peace for a few years after the Peace of Versailles

(3 September 1783), the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in Europe again influenced contemporary Indian politics. After France had declared war against England on 1 February 1793, the French Factory at Patna was seized by the English along with their other settlements in India. The Dutch were badly affected in Europe during the Napoleonic Wars. On the conquest of Holland by France in 1795, the Dutch possessions in India were taken under the protection of the English, probably to prevent their utilization by the pro-French powers in India for anti-British activities. The English Government in Calcutta ordered Mr H. Douglas, Judge and Magistrate of Patna, on 14 August 1795, to occupy the local Dutch factory. The possessions of the Dutch in India, including their settlement at Patna, were restored to them in 1817. The Dutch finally ceded their possessions in India to the English in 1824-5.

The Danes started a factory at Patna in 1774-5 with George Henrich Berner as Chief till his death in 1790. When in 1801 Denmark entered into hostilities against England, the factory and property of the Danes at Patna were seized by the English. The possessions of the Danes in India were given back to them after the Treaty of Amiens, signed in March 1802. Their factory at Patna was restored to Captain Vonder Osten, Resident of His Danish Majesty at Patna, in October 1802. Again in 1808, with a new turn in European politics after Napoleon's Berlin Decrees, the English decided to occupy the Danish possessions in the East. Accordingly Mr N. B. Edmonstone, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, instructed Mr H. Douglas on 27 January 1808, to capture all factories, buildings, property, records and so on, of His Danish Majesty or of the Danish East India Company, found within his jurisdiction. He was to consider all 'Civil, Military and Marine Officers and all Europeans in the service of His Danish Majesty or of the Danish East India Company' as 'prisoners of war.' Thus gradually the Danes lost all their possessions in India.

During the closing years of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth, some important citizens of U.P. who had been forced to leave Oudh by court intrigues and other adverse circumstances, came and settled in Bihar under the control of the Company's Government. After the capture of Wazir Ali, who had conspired against the Company in 1798-9, his wives and children were kept in Bihar under strict supervision of the government here. Ilahī Khanum, one of the wives of Wazir Ali, and her son were sent to Patna in March 1807 by

J. Collins, Resident at Lucknow. Both of them were accommodated in this city by its Magistrate, H. Douglas, at government cost, an allowance of Rs 75 per mensem, exclusive of house rent, being given to them. The 'principal object of Government in providing a residence for Illahee Khanum [Ilahī Khanum] and her son at the public expense was to prevent their exploitation by disaffected persons to organize an anti-British conspiracy. For security reasons the Company's Government soon removed them to Monghyr. At Ilahī Khanum's request, the Company's Government permitted her, in May 1813, to go from Monghyr to Chapra to reside there with her son.

The relations between Nepal and Bihar form a significant phase in the political history of this period. Mīr Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal, sent an expedition to Nepal in 1762 but his army was signally defeated under the walls of Makwanpur. An expedition sent by the English in 1767 at the suggestion of Mr Golding, the Commercial Resident at Bettiah, also met with disaster. Captain Kinlock, who commanded this expedition, advanced into the hills in October 1767, but was obliged to retreat early in December for lack of supplies and because of an outbreak of disease among his soldiers.

As the English were gradually establishing their political supremacy in Bengal and Bihar during the post-Plassey years, the Gurkhas rose to power in the territory skirting the northern frontier of Hindustan and finally subjugated the Nepal valley in 1768 under the leadership of Prithvi Narayan. A clash between the Gurkhas and the English thus became inevitable, particularly because the Gurkhas occasionally encroached on the northern frontier of Bihar and also interrupted Bihar's age-long commerce with Nepal and Tibet.

In 1769 the Council at Calcutta accepted the offer of James Logan to undertake a mission to Nepal, Tibet and the neighbouring countries. But this move did not produce any tangible result. In 1781 the Raja of Nepal purchased a house at Patna (Nepal Kothi) from Colonel Alexander Hardy. It originally served as the temporary residence of pilgrims from Nepal who came to bathe in the Ganges and to make the pilgrimage to Gaya.

The unsettled frontier between Nepal and north Bihar caused frequent troubles from 1768 onwards, though open clashes did not actually take place for some years. Thus the Company's Government wrote to the Raja of Nepal on 3 February 1787, complaining that his men were encroaching on the village of Ashruffa and the borders of Tirhut to the great detriment of cultivation.

The Raja was requested to take suitable steps to prevent such activities in future and to restore confiscated goods to their rightful owners. Troubles due to the undefined frontier also occurred in the Purnea area. A letter from the Collector of Tirhut to the Board of Revenue, dated 3 April 1788, shows the difficulties in the settlement of disputes regarding some frontier villages. The Collector of Tirhut wrote to Mr Archibald Montgomerie, Collector of Saran and Champaran, inviting his help in preventing some zamindars of Champaran 'from uniting with the subjects of Nepal and holding land dependent on the Nepal Government.'

In 1791 the English tried to conclude a commercial treaty with Nepal through the efforts of Mr Jonathan Duncan, the Resident at Banaras. Accordingly Mr Duncan wrote to Mr Montgomerie, Collector of Saran and Champaran, on 17 June 1791, for information regarding imports from the territories under the Nepal Government, a convenient station in Nepal for the payment of duties by merchants on exports from the Company's dominions, and the grievances of Company traders with respect to their trade with Nepal, for which they sought a remedy. Mr Montgomerie sent the necessary information to Mr Duncan on 17 July 1791. On 2 February 1792, Mr R. Bathurst, Collector of Tirhut, wrote to Mr. Duncan supplying him with a list of articles imported from, and exported to Nepal. He observed that there were no good prospects of trade unless protection was given by the Nepal Government to traders, and unless duties were fixed at reduced rates. A commercial treaty was actually concluded with Nepal by Lord Cornwallis's Government, and Colonel Kirkpatrick was sent on a mission to Katmandu, which, however, did not produce any favourable result.

The alliance of the English with the Nepal Government was not to last long, and Captain Knox was recalled from Katmandu. The undefined frontiers and rival claims of the Gurkhas and the English caused serious conflict between the two. It came, as is well known, in the time of Lord Hastings.

After the treaty of Sagauli (1816), which ended the Anglo-Nepalese War, a British Resident (Edward Gardner) was received at Katmandu and the Company's Government in Calcutta sent 16 packets of presents for the Nepal Raja. On 9 November 1818, Mr Gardner informed Mr Tippet, Magistrate of Patna, that Colonel Runbeer Singh and some other Sardars of the Nepal darbar would proceed on a pilgrimage to Gaya with about 600 or 700 men, 300 or 400 of them

being armed sepoys. He requested the latter to show 'proper attention to the party during the intended pilgrimage.'

It appears that in 1854, the Nepal Government assembled some troops on the Bihar border to 'obtain reparation' from the officers at Tirhut for some injuries done to the subjects of Nepal. The Commissioner of Patna, Mr W. Dampier, took the necessary precautions to prevent consequent panic in the minds of the people of Bihar.

During the major part of the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the British Government in Bihar and Orissa had to be sufficiently vigilant on the western and south-western frontiers against the apprehended inroads of the Marathas and also the Pindaris. The British Government were relieved of the anxiety of Maratha and Pindari inroads only after their successful campaign of 1817-18.

Though British authority was gradually being consolidated in the plains during the second half of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the task of securing the complete submission of the hillmen, Santhals and Adivasis, did not prove to be very easy. As a matter of fact, in the tracts inhabited by them there were occasional challenges in the shape of open revolts against the new order. The process of transition entailed certain hardships on these people and also encroached on some of their traditional rights.

The Rajmahal Hills were inhabited by the Paharias and in the adjacent tracts the Santhals had gradually established their settlements from the early days of British administration by clearing the forests. In that area some non-aboriginal people, such as the Bengalees and up-country men, had come from other parts to settle for trade and other purposes. The system which Cleveland had established there broke down within a few years of his death, chiefly due to the lack of interest of all his successors except Mr Formbelle. Abdul Rasul Khan, selected as *suzawal* by Mr Cleveland, remained in charge of administration after Mr Formbelle, but he could not work properly. Reginald Heber, Lord Bishop of Calcutta, who came to Bhagalpur in August 1824, in the course of his journey through the upper provinces of India, writes that Lord Hastings tried to revive the school started by Cleveland for the Paharias and also reorganize the Hill Rangers. But his proposal to arm two companies with rifles could not be carried out because, as Bishop Heber notes, the 'men disliked the service exceedingly, having a great objection to wear green.' On their return journey, Lord and Lady Hastings made a short excursion into the Rajmahal Hills, met the Paharia chiefs and promised to send

them useful agricultural implements and a stock of seed potatoes. But this promise was never fulfilled.

In 1818 the Company's Government deputed Mr Sutherland, Joint Magistrate of Bhagalpur, to enquire into the state of administration of the Hills and the nature of tenures on which the Paharias held lands, and to suggest measures for future administration. After an enquiry, Mr Sutherland submitted a report in 1819. His main recommendations were for the declaration of the hill tract as property of the government, a similar arrangement regarding the plain area skirting the hills, which could be distinguished from the adjoining zamindari estates, and a demarcation of the extent of the hilly tract and the skirts of the hills. The government accepted these recommendations in 1823 and the next year appointed the Hon'ble John Petty Wood to demarcate the boundaries with the assistance of Captain Tanner as surveyor. On the completion of their work, the Damin-i-Koh was formed in 1832-3 with a definite boundary comprising 1,366 square miles, of which the tract outside the hills covered 500 square miles. For general civil administration and fiscal affairs the Damin-i-Koh in 1837-8 was placed under a Superintendent, Mr James Pontet of the uncovenanted Civil Service. For criminal matters, it was placed under the Magistrate of Bhagalpur and Police stations were attached to Bhagalpur, Birbhum and Berhampore (Murshidabad). Petty cases were sometimes decided by the Superintendent and for more complicated ones the Santhals had to go to Bhagalpur, where instead of getting real justice, they were very often hoodwinked by cunning amlas, mukhteers, peons and barkandazes. As a writer observed in the *Calcutta Review* of 1860, while a Santhal 'found justice in the shape of the Magistrate so far off and so terribly difficult of access, he found justice nearer home in the shape of the Darogahs and Thana police, the authorized agents of the District Magistrate, but found it only to find it his bane.'

Not only was justice denied to these simple and unsophisticated people, but their economic condition was also badly affected by the oppression and fraud of the non-Adivasi merchants and moneylenders. As a writer in the *Calcutta Review* of 1856 observed, 'Zamindars or more properly speaking zamindari retainers, as gomasta, surbarakar, peons and other mahajans and their mastajirs or agents, the police, the revenue and court amlas have exercised a combined system of extortions, oppressive exactions, forcible dispossession of property, abuse and personal violence and a variety of

petty tyrannies upon the timid and yielding Santhals. Usurious interest on loans of money ranging from 50 to 500 per cent; false measures of the haut hāt and market; wilful and uncharitable trespass by the rich by means of their untethered cattle, tattoos (small horses), ponies and even elephants, on the growing crops of the poorer race, and such like illegalities have been prevalent. Even a demand by individuals from the Santhals of security for good conduct is a thing not unknown; embarrassing pledges for debt also formed another mode of oppression.' Sometimes family security and honour, which the Santhals have always guarded with jealous care, were at stake at the hands of the European staff engaged in railway construction. In the *Calcutta Review* of 1856 we read of 'alleged forcible abduction of two Santhal women, and even murder, and some unjust acts of oppression, as taking kids, fowls etc., without payment on the part of Europeans employed on the line of the railroad.'

Administrative abuses and economic injustice naturally drove the Santhals to the rebellion which broke out furiously in 1855 and continued for about two years before it was suppressed by ruthless measures, including the proclamation of martial law. One effect of this insurrection was the formation, according to Act 37 of 1855, of a separate non-regulation district, known as the District of Santhal Parganas. It was placed under the control of the Commissioner of Bhagalpur and was divided into five (subsequently six) subdivisions, which were to be administered by a Deputy Commissioner with his headquarters at Dumka and four Assistant Commissioners. The Hon'ble (afterwards Sir) Ashley Eden, Assistant to the Special Commissioner for the suppression of the Santhal Insurrection, was appointed the first Deputy Commissioner of the district.

But this administrative change did not secure the complete eradication of evils such as the enhancement of rents by zamindars and the oppression by the amlas who rackrented the Santhals. Further, under the Civil Procedure Code of 1859, the moneylenders obtained decrees involving usurious rates of interest. All this again caused unrest among the Santhals in the Dumka and Godda subdivisions in 1871. To meet the situation, the government passed a special Regulation in 1872, forbidding exorbitant rates of interest and sanctioning a record of landlords' and tenants' rights. The new Regulation also 're-affirmed the exemption of the district from the operation of all Regulations and Acts not specially extended to it.' According to this Regulation, Mr Browne Wood was appointed Settlement Officer

and conducted settlement operations throughout the district from 1873 to 1879. One of the interesting results of the settlement was the preservation of the Santhali village community system, under which the village community as a whole held the village wastes.

In the year 1871 the Kherwar movement also started. It aimed at social and religious purification by exhorting the Santhals to worship the true God only and to abstain from intoxicating liquor and also from eating pork and fowls. They were further told that the land belonged to them and they need not pay rent for it. Though the movement was suppressed immediately, there was another outburst in 1874-5. Two of the leaders, Bhagirath Manjhi and Gyan Parganait, were imprisoned and military and police reinforcements were stationed at Dumka, but the movement took a formidable shape in 1880-1. To overawe the Santhals, the government posted a body of military police in the district and a field force of 4,500 cavalry and infantry was also brought here under Colonel (afterwards General Sir) Thomas Gordon. But the Kherwar movement did not become extinct. It occasionally revived in subsequent years.

In the areas extending from the Jungle or Western Mahals of Midnapur and including Manbhum, Singhbhum, Dhalbhum, Barabhum and Chotanagpur, the gradual extension of British authority led to clashes with the old and prevailing interests of local Rajas, Chiefs and the people. The new masters had to face complex problems. Between 1769 and 1774, the Rajas of Dhalbhum or Ghatsila resisted the infiltration of British authority into their jurisdiction with determined efforts. When one of them, Jagannath Dhal, could not be subdued even after a series of attacks and counter-attacks, the Company's government reinstated him in his estate.

The Chuars, with their strongholds in Manbhum and Barabhum, particularly in the hills between Barabhum and Ghatsila, also opposed the early efforts of the British to extend their control in those parts. In 1771, Captain Goodyear engaged in suppressing them, met with strong resistance from the Chuar Sardars, Shyam Ganjan of Dhadka, Subhla Singh of Khaliapal, and Dubraj, the eldest son of the Barabhum Raja. In 1772, Captain Carter, Lieutenant Gall and Lieutenant Young proceeded against them and a temporary conciliation was effected. In 1780, a district was formed called the Ramgarh Hill Tracts. Mr Champan, the first British Civil Administrator of Chotanagpur, had his headquarters alternately at Chatra in Hazaribagh district, and at Sherghati in Gaya district. The tracts embraced

the later districts of Hazaribagh, Palamau, portions of Gaya, Manbhum and Monghyr, and Chotanagpur proper.

But there were several recurrences of fresh trouble for the British Government. In November 1782, disturbances started in Jhalda and Tamar. These were put down by Major Crawford, who took charge of collections and suggested the complete disarming of the inhabitants of Jhalda, Pachet and Ramgarh. But again in 1783-4 the Jagirdar of Khaliapal organized a resistance with the help of the Chuars. Though he was subdued, there were several outbreaks in Jhalda and the adjoining estates of Tamar in Ramgarh between 1789 and 1795 when the Permanent Settlement of this area was completed. In 1795, however, the Pachet zamindari was put up for sale for failure to pay arrears, but the zamindar, supported by his tenants opposed the sale. The situation was further complicated by a fresh Chuar outbreak in 1798-9 in the perganās of Raipur, Ambikanagar and Supur adjoining Manbhum and Barabhum on the east. The 'whole area was practically in a state of insurrection' and it took some years before British authority could control these opposing forces. In Pachet, the sale was cancelled and the zamindar restored. The supervision of Pachet was once again transferred from the Collector of Ramgarh to the Collector of Birbhum. In Wellesley's time there was a proposal to form the Jungle Mahals into a new district, separate from Midnapur, Birbhum and Burdwan. By Regulation XVIII of 1805, the Jungle Mahals, comprising 23 perganās and mahals in all the jungle tracts of Burdwan and the present district of Bankura, were formed into a separate magisterial jurisdiction with headquarters at Bankura.

Early relations of the Company's Government with the Raja of Chotanagpur were not entirely cordial. The Company tried to bring this area under control about four years after the Diwani grant. In 1769, Captain Camac penetrated into Palamau to reinstate the local Raja and to bring that area under British authority, but it continued in a disturbed state for many years more. There was no love lost between the Raja of Chotanagpur and the Raja of Ramgarh. In 1772 Drip Nath Sahi of Chotanagpur met Captain Camac and promised to pay nazarana and to render services against the Marathas. Captain Camac then recommended to the Council at Patna that the Raja should be allowed to pay his revenue to the Company direct instead of through the Raja of Ramgarh, as had been the practice for so long. Captain Camac's recommendation was based on the

consideration that the Raja's 'country would form an effective barrier to the incursions of the Marathas, thus covering Bihar and Birbhum and at the same time giving them the command of the passes into the Deccan.' The Council at Patna accepted Captain Camac's recommendation and the Raja agreed to pay an annual revenue of Rs 12,000 including customs and transit duties. For various reasons, the Raja fell into arrears in the payment of the stipulated amount and occasionally the Company's officers sent troops into his territory to realize dues. The Company's government further began to interfere more and more in his internal administration, which was not efficient enough to curb the forces of disorder. In 1809 he was forced to maintain police thanas, but the new police system was 'no more successful than the feudal system which it had superseded.' In 1819 the Raja was for a time deprived of his control over the police. For a few years he tried to oppose the growing British interference but to no effect.

Mukund Singh, the ninth Raja of Ramgarh, refused to acknowledge the authority of the British Government. The British started intrigues with Tej Singh, and a force under Lieutenant Goddard, accompanied by Tej Singh, attacked Mukund Singh in 1772. Raja Mukund Singh fled to the hills. The British Government leased the country to Tej Singh for five years, and after his death, to his son Paras Nath Singh by a fresh sanad, dated 17 September 1784.

The smouldering discontent of the Adivasis of Chotanagpur exploded into several open revolts before the outbreak of the Indian freedom movement in the year 1857-9. In 1820 there was a disturbance at Tamar when two Mundas, Rudu and Kantu, organized a large number of their followers and defied the authorities. They were reduced by large-scale military operations. The Raja of Singhbhum, or the Raja of Porhat as he was called, who resisted for some years the attempts of the British to extend their control over his territory, was forced in 1820 to become a feudatory and to pay annual tribute. In the same year, however, the Hos of Singhbhum attacked a British force with desperate valour, baffling the efforts of the Political Agent, Major Roughsedge, to overcome them. They were subdued for a while the next year, only after the employment of a larger force against them; but on the withdrawal of the British troops, they again became restive. It was only after a number of Hos had been slaughtered and their villages burnt that they laid

down their arms in 1827 and were forced to enter into an agreement, some of the conditions of which were as follows:—

'(1) We acknowledge ourselves to be subject to the British Government.

(2) We agree to pay to our chiefs or zamindars, eight annas for each plough for the five years next ensuing, and afterwards one rupee if our circumstances admit it.

(3) We would keep the roads throughout the country open and safe for all travellers.

(4) We would allow persons of all castes to settle in our villages and afford them protection; moreover, we shall educate our children in Oriya and Hindustani.

(5) If we should be oppressed by our chiefs or zamindars, we will not resort to arms for redress but complain to officers commanding the troops or to some other competent authority.'

Even so, the Hos were not reduced to complete submission and they allied themselves with the Mundas of Chotanagpur during the latter's movement in the years 1831-2.

The Munda rising of 1831-2, commonly called the Kol Rebellion, was caused by grievances of various kinds, such as enhancement of rent, exaction of forced labour, realization of interest by creditors at exorbitant rates and so on. The main grievance which set off the explosion was agrarian. The old system of village communities continued long among both the Hos and Mundas. Some villages, usually seven to twelve in number, were grouped together in units called pus or upland. Each group was under the jurisdiction of a single leader called a manki, who paid the rent of the villages to the government or to the zamindar. He supervised the work of the village headmen, or mundas as they were called, in general civil and police functions. But the chieftains of Chotanagpur leased the villages to farmers coming from Bengal or other parts of Bihar in supersession of the village community. By this process, many of these outsiders settled there, often by dispossessing the hereditary occupants. Besides forcibly exacting money from the people by various means, these outsiders also heaped indignities upon their family honour by immoral conduct.

The immediate occasion for the rising was an incident which took place in perganā Sonpur. A manki named Singhrai was dispossessed of twelve villages by a Sikh and some female members of his family were alleged to have been dishonoured by the Sikh. A

Muhammadan farmer also was said to have behaved in an objectionable manner with one Surga, a Munda of Bandgaon in Singhbhum. All these reports exasperated the Hos and the Mundas, who rose to redress their acute grievances and in fury resorted to violence. Starting in December 1831, the conflagration spread quickly over 'practically the whole of the present district of Ranchi and overflowed into Hazaribagh, the Tori perganā of Palamau, and the western portion of Manbhum.'

The British Government resorted to extreme steps to repress the insurgents. The Ramgarh Battalion, reinforced by the 50th Bengal Infantry and several other detachments, crushed them in 1832. The two leaders, Surga and Singhrai's brother, held out to the last. One Buddho Bhagat, with his whole family and one hundred and fifty of his followers, perished bravely defending his village. Numerous Kol villages were burnt and, according to Shore's estimate, about five thousand square miles of territory were laid waste in order to crush the Kols.

The Hos of Singbhum continued tobe defiant. Military operations were launched against them in November 1836, and by February 1837, Colonel Richards thoroughly subdued them. They were freed from the Porhat chiefs and brought under the immediate control of the British Government. A new arrangement was effected, by which twenty-three pirs, previously under the control of the Rajas of Porhat, Saraikela and Kharsawan, together with four others taken from Mayurbhanj, were formed into a new unit called Kolhan which was placed under a British officer with headquarters at Chaibasa.

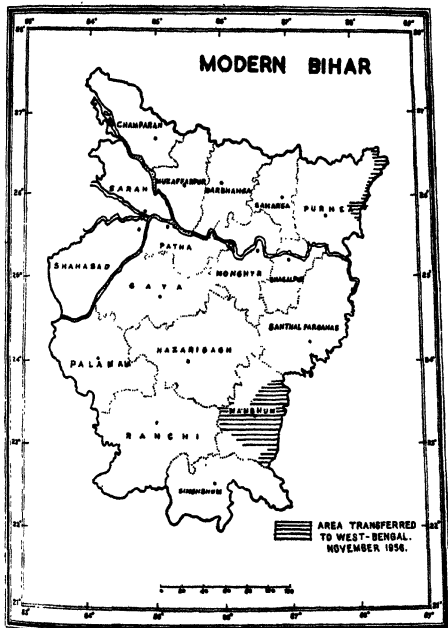
Immediately after the Kol insurrection, came the revolt of the Bhumij in Manbhum, known as Gangānarayan hangama. Its leader Gangānarayan, a disappointed claimant to the Barabhum estate, was thoroughly dissatisfied with Madhab, the diwan of the estate, who opposed him and deprived him of several tarafs. The latter also made himself extremely unpopular by his usurious moneylending business and by the imposition of extra taxes or rents on the Ghatwals (keepers of the passes) and ghartaki or a house-tax throughout the estate. Alienated by these and other unfavourable conditions, the peasants of the area joined Gangānarayan. On the authority of a report by Mr Dent, who conducted military operations against the uprising, it has been written in the *Manbhum District Gazetteer* that 'dissatisfaction with the administration of the law of debtor and creditor appears to have been ripe at this time in Barabhum,

and the sale of ancestral holdings for debt was particularly objected to as something entirely opposed to the custom of the aboriginal tenantry. Nor were indebtedness and its consequences confined to the tenantry, but we are told that almost all the zamindars, members of their families holding maintenance or other grants, the sardar Ghatwals, and the bigger immediate holders were generally in embarrassed circumstances. General improvidence seems to have been the order of the day, and much of the land had already, at this time, passed more or less permanently to moneylending outsiders. The rule of inheritance by primogeniture kept the large estates nominally intact; in practice the necessity of providing for members of the family by maintenance grants imposed an ever-increasing burden on the zamindar, and continually decreased his cash resources. To all these people, therefore, Gangānarayan's outbreak came as a welcome opportunity. The state of things disclosed was not unlike that already found in Chotanagpur proper. . .'

Backed by popular support, this movement soon assumed formidable proportions, and directed attacks against cucheries and thanas and government troops in the months of May and June 1832. After the arrival of the 34th Native Infantry in the month of November and the elaborate military arrangements of Mr Braddon, Lieutenant Trimmer and Mr Dent, Gangānarayan and his followers were defeated in several isolated engagements. He fled to Singhbhum where for some time he made an unsuccessful attempt to organize the Hos and was later killed while attacking a stronghold of the ruler of Kharsawan. Thus ended Gangānarayan's brief uprising.

All these revolts convinced the British Government of the necessity for making new arrangements to tighten their hold. By Regulation XIII of 1833, the district of the Jungle Mahals was dissolved. The estates of Shergarh, Senpahari and Bishnupur were transferred to Burdwan and a new district of Manbhum with its headquarters at Manbazar was formed, embracing, besides the present area of the district, the estates of Supur, Raipur, Ambikanagar, Simlapal, Belaidiha, Phulkusma, Shyamsundarpur and Dhalbhum. (Dhalbhum was transferred to Singhbhum in 1845-6). The headquarters of this district was shifted in 1838 to Purulia. In 1834, the South-West Frontier Agency was established with headquarters at Kishnapur (Ranchi) and jurisdiction over the whole of Chotanagpur proper as well as Palamau, Kharakdiha, Ramgarh, Kundu, the Jungle Mahals (except Bishnupur, Sainpahari and Shergarh), Dhalbhum

Map VI



MODERN BIHAR
CHAMPARAN
SARAN
MUZAFFARPUR
DARBHANGA
SAHARSA
PURNEA
PATNA
SHAHABAD
GAYA
MONGHYR
BHAGALPUR
SANTHAL PARGANAS
HAZARIBAGH
PALAMAU
RANCHI
MANBHUM
SINGHBHUM
AREA TRANSFERRED TO WEST-BENGAL. NOVEMBER 1956.

perganā and the tributary Mahals. Captain Thomas Wilkinson was appointed the first Agent. This arrangement was changed by Regulation XX of 1854, by which the Division of Chotanagpur was constituted under a Commissioner.

After the movement of 1857-9, the last great armed onslaught against British political supremacy in India during the nineteenth century, the British Government introduced successive administrative changes in Bihar as in other parts of India to maintain intact their hold on this country. There was nothing of particular political importance in this province during this period, nor in the years following. But it played a prominent role in the different phases of India's struggle for emancipation from British imperial control, a role which has been briefly dealt with in another section.

B. Administration in Bihar 1757-1947

Having dealt with the political changes in Bihar during this period, we now come to review the administrative system and the changes it has gone through. Since there was no separate or distinctive administrative set-up for the province, Bihar has to be considered in the background of the all-India set-up as well as of the Bengal set-up because Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were administered as one province till 1912. It is also convenient to deal in this section with administration during the entire period from 1757 to 1947, as it was a continuous process of evolution during the British régime. It is obvious that while dealing with the all-India and the Bengal systems of administration we shall be very brief, since the object is to furnish only a background for a better understanding of Bihar's administration.

THE CHANGEOVER

For a proper appreciation of Bihar's administration since 1757 it is necessary to bear in mind certain common features which the British introduced in the administrative institutions of the country as a whole. They were more advanced in this matter than their Moghal predecessors. They built up a system of administration designed to supplant the rule of mere custom by that of law. This affected the variegated patterns of Moghal administration and tried to reduce them to a uniform system in order to facilitate centralized control, supervision and direction. It also contributed to the political unity of the country.

Unlike the Moghals, the British were a naval power. They penetrated into the vast land-mass of India through seaports like Bombay and Calcutta, Surat and Madras. These constituted not only their trading centres, but later developed into centres of military reserves and political power. The conquest of territory proceeded from these centres and areas acquired from time to time were annexed to one or another according to contiguity or administrative convenience. Their navy protected coastal areas and maintained lines of communication and supply through these nerve centres. Their Indian government built up in time an Indian army, but the navy always remained a monopoly of the Home Government, and naval considerations always prevailed over others. This explains why Madras, Bombay and Calcutta came to occupy a position of pre-eminence, which, none of the inland capitals established subsequently ever enjoyed.

The British government in India introduced yet another distinguishing feature. This was the committee form of government. It sprang from the civil character and commercial exigencies of the East India Company who adopted this form as the best mode of controlling their servants, operating thousands of miles away from England. Thus, before the establishment of a central government in 1773, each of the Settlements of Madras, Bombay and Calcutta was governed by a President with a Council, enjoying equal rank and authority and transacting all business by a majority of votes. With the acquisition of territories, the President became a Governor and was later vested with powers to override the decisions of the Council. But the old rule of the majority could not be fully dispensed with. The head of the executive government was under an obligation to give reasons in writing whenever he decided to act against the views of the majority and he could not take any decision outside the Council.

These features first developed in the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal which, by 1765, had become by far the most important of the three Presidencies. In addition to a number of districts obtained from the Nawabs since the English victory at Plassey in 1757, the East India Company became in 1765 *de facto* sovereign of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa by virtue of the Moghal grant of the Diwani or right of revenue and civil administration. Fort William became the nucleus of the Company's central government in India and it was here that the Company first evolved an administrative apparatus

which subsequently guided other provinces in the organization of their own administration. Even to this day the district staff, for instance, continues on the model of the original office of the Collector established in Bengal in 1772. As Bihar constituted a sub-province of Bengal, its civil administration had been linked up with the latter, until it became a separate province on 1 April 1912 and its administration followed the Bengal pattern.

THE DIWANI SYSTEM

Bengal under the Moghals was administered by two co-ordinate authorities, the Nawab or Nazim and the Diwan; the former exercised executive functions, while the latter was responsible for fiscal administration and civil justice. The grant of the Diwani reduced both the Moghal Emperor and the Nawab to nonentities. The command of the army and the receipts of the revenues came into the hands of the British, while law and order continued to be the exclusive responsibility of the Nawab's officers. The Company also entrusted to them the work of revenue collection and civil justice, duties more properly belonging under the Moghal grant to the British Government. The British aimed at securing at the earliest opportunity all advantages from the acquisition of the Diwani. But this could not have been realized by employing the Company's servants, who were generally unacquainted with the revenue resources of the three provinces. Muhammad Reza Khan, a friend of the British, was therefore appointed to exercise both the civil and criminal jurisdictions on behalf of the Company and the Nawab respectively. He was to discharge his obligations in consultation with the British Resident at Murshidabad.

A similar arrangement was made for the province of Bihar. The British Chief at Patna received the revenues from Maharaja Shitab Rai who acted as Naib Diwan and Naib Nazim. He had been a provincial Diwan of the Moghal Emperor and enjoyed the confidence of all parties alike. He was entrusted with negotiations for the grant of the Diwani in 1765 and, in the year following, he was associated with the conducting of a diplomatic conference held at Chapra to form alliances against the Marathas.

The actual administration of the Diwani provinces was thus carried on through subordinate Indian agencies. The Nawab became titular and the Company divested themselves of responsibility. Such an arrangement was bound to fail, as it did. The Nawab's

officers who were immediately in charge of administration possessed neither character nor means to enforce decisions; and the British, who commanded power and resources, worried little as long as the flow of the Company's revenue receipts continued unaffected. The result was that 'the Nazims exacted what they could from the zamindars and the great farmers of the revenue, whom they left at liberty to plunder all below them, reserving to themselves the prerogatives of plundering them in their turn, when they were supposed to have enriched themselves with the spoils of the country.' Drunk with power and corrupted at the sight of boundless wealth, the Company's servants, on the other hand, advanced their private trade through native 'gomastas' (managers) who, in the name of their masters, forced the unhappy natives to buy and sell goods at arbitrary rates.

To remedy these evils, European 'supervisors' were appointed to the Bengal districts in 1769. In Bihar, this plan of supervision by European officers was introduced in June 1770, when a supervisor was appointed for each of the districts of Saran and Champaran, Shahabad, Tirhut, Rohtas, and Monghyr. Patna district continued to be under the immediate charge of the Chief of Patna. A Controlling Council of Revenue was established a few months later at Patna for the whole of Bihar, and at Murshidabad for Bengal. The latter however had the overall controlling authority over both Bihar and Bengal. The Council at Patna consisted of three civil servants including the Chief, and its main objects were to effect economy and to control the conduct of the supervisors in the districts.

But these were only half-hearted measures. The plan of supervision was only exploratory, not executive in nature. Supervisors were only to collect and supply information about the state of things in their districts: the state and capacity of the lands; the revenue demands and exactions; the condition of commerce, and the administration of justice. They were to report cases of irregularity and oppression, but not to punish the oppressor. In point of ability and honesty many of them lagged far behind expectations. But even those who were able and honest could not interpose and punish exactions. 'Whatever may have been the conduct of individuals,' wrote Warren Hastings, 'the blame is not so much attributable to them as to the want of a principle of government, adequate to its substance and a coercive power to enforce it.'

THE 1772 REFORMS

It was in fact left to the genius of Warren Hastings to break away substantially from the Company's commercial approach and switch over to government and administration. He supplied a political principle to raise its dignity in the eyes of the other rulers in the country, and favoured an open avowal of the sovereignty of Great Britain. 'All the arts of policy,' he observed, 'cannot conceal the power by which these provinces are ruled, nor can all the arts of sophistry avail to transfer the responsibility of them to the Nawab, when it is as visible as the light of the sun that they originate from our own government, that the Nawab is a mere pageant without so much as the shadow of authority, and even his most consequential agents receive their appointment from the recommendation of the Company and the express nomination of their (the Company's) servants.'

In May 1772 the Company accordingly stood forth as Diwan and took over the entire care and management of the revenue through the direct agency of their own servants. The services of Muhammad Reza Khan and Shitab Rai were dispensed with. The Controlling Councils of Revenue at Patna and Murshidabad were abolished and the Khalsa (chief revenue office) brought down to Calcutta under the immediate supervision of the government. These measures contributed to a centralization and uniformity in the mode of inspection. The supervisors were designated Collectors and vested with a measure of executive authority necessary for the discharge of their obligations. The President and Council were to act as a Board of Revenue when sitting jointly in the revenue department created in 1772. The Collectors were made directly responsible to them. For the purposes of settlement, the President and Council constituted a committee to go on circuits and take decisions at the headquarters of each district with the assistance of the Collector and a native Diwan subordinate to him.

In drawing up his judicial plan, Warren Hastings tried to inculcate vigour into the indigenous system of justice which had in most districts broken down on account of the later looseness of the Moghal government. His conviction was that if only original principles were observed, the indigenous courts might well serve the purpose of the Company's government. But in his judicial plan he did not ignore the two main developments which had resulted from the disintegration of the Moghal central authority, namely the general

supersession of the district officers of justice by zamindars or farmers of revenue, and the division of districts into 'chaklas' constituting spheres of influence of revenue farmers. The problem of judicial reform thus involved a reconstitution of the districts and the establishment of regular courts of justice. Procedure and conduct rules were then required to regulate proceedings. Hastings did all this under his plan approved by the Council on 21 August 1772.

The districts of Saran and Champaran, Tirhut, Rohtas, Monghyr, Bhagalpur, Rajmahal and Purnea were constituted into Collectorships. The supervisor of Shahabad was recalled for mishandling revenue matters, and the district was placed under the immediate charge of the Chief at Patna. The hill tracts of Bihar now forming part of Palamau, Chotanagpur, Ramgarh and the Santhal Parganas were conquered and placed under military control. A portion of Bhagalpur was at this time separated from that district and included in what was then known as the Jugletterry district.

In each of the Collectorships, the President and Council established two courts of 'adālat': one a court of Diwani adālat and the other of Faujdari adālat. The Collector presided over the first and supervised the conduct of the second which continued under the immediate charge of Muhammadan judges. His supervision extended to ensuring a proper observance of judicial rules governing the sifting of evidence, and maintaining proper records of judicial proceedings. On a similar pattern, two appellate courts were established at Calcutta, the 'sadr diwani adālat' and the 'sadr nizamat adālat', the former being held by the President and two of the members of the Council and the latter supervised by the President himself until 1775, when it was transferred to Murshidabad to be administered by the officers of the Nawab. The Regulations of 1772 prohibited private persons from exercising judicial functions. Arbitrary fines in the form of perquisites or commission on the amount of money recovered were abolished and Muhammadan judges were enlisted as regular adālat officers payable by government.

The reforms of 1772 thus tried to lay the foundation of district administration, with the Collector at its head exercising revenue, judicial and executive authority, subject to the final control, supervision and direction of the government at Fort William. But zamindars and revenue farmers viewed this arrangement with disfavour, tending as it did to affect their independence and reduce their local influence. Moreover, as the establishment of the British

agency involved an increase in the cost of collection, and as the Company still attached almost exclusive importance to revenue receipts, this arrangement did not last long. Following their instructions, regulations were enacted on 23 November 1773 to group the districts of the Diwani provinces into six grand divisions called provincial councils. Collectors were recalled from the districts but were absorbed as members of one or the other of these provincial councils, each of which consisted of a Chief and four or five civil servants, with a secretary, Persian translator and some assistants. The Calcutta division was placed under a committee of revenue composed of two of the members of the Supreme Council. The districts were left in charge of Indian *naibs* (deputies) who made the collections and administered civil justice. At the headquarters of each of the provincial councils one of the members acted as the superintendent of justice in monthly rotation. The executive powers of the Chief were further defined and augmented by regulations enacted in 1774.

THE REGULATING ACT OF 1773

A new authority was in the meantime constituted under the Regulating Act of 1773 which converted the government of Bengal into a central government consisting of Warren Hastings as Governor-General and a Council of four members who were collectively vested with the whole civil and military administration of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal. The Act recognized all the measures and actions taken by the President and the Council, and in addition authorized the Governor-General and the Council to control the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay in all matters of war and peace. The Governor-General was to exercise the casting vote only in the event of opinions in the Council being equally balanced.

The Act also provided for the establishment of a Supreme Court for the Settlement of Fort William in Calcutta. Its jurisdiction extended over all Europeans residing in the Presidency as well as those found directly or indirectly in the service of the Company.

The Regulating Act, however, suffered from a number of constitutional and legal defects arising from the disavowal of sovereignty. These led to conflicts of jurisdiction between the Government and the Supreme Court, conflicts which brought to light the irregularities and imperfections of both. Legislative measures, therefore, were

enacted subsequently to remedy their defects and to supply their inadequacies. The Amending Act of 1781, for instance, defined more precisely the personnel and territorial jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The India Act of 1784 set up a more effective machinery of parliamentary control and increased the powers of the Governor-General by reducing the strength of his Council to three. The Amending Act of 1786 went to the length of investing him with the power to veto the decisions of his Council, although he was not to use it except in emergencies.

The provincial councils, on the other hand, were divested of judicial functions in 1780. A separate provincial 'diwani adālat' was constituted under a superintendent within the jurisdiction of each of the six provincial councils. The number of such civil courts was increased to eighteen in April 1781. Of these, seven were established in Bihar. These were at Bhagalpur, Chitra (in Ramgarh), Darbhanga, Lauriya (in Champaran), Patna, Raghunathpur, and Tajpur (in Purnea). With the exception of Bhagalpur and Chitra, each of these courts was placed under a civil servant, now designated as judge instead of superintendent. The courts at Bhagalpur and Chitra, like those at Rangpur and Chittagong in Bengal, were held by Collectors for geographical and strategic reasons. The business of all these courts was conducted to rules laid down by the regulations of 5 July 1781, which were designed to reduce the degree of discretion as well as to introduce uniformity in the administration of justice, especially in respect of process and evidence.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The jurisdiction of the provincial councils was further affected by the alienation of a number of districts from their control, a measure dictated by administrative exigencies. The districts thus alienated and formed into separate collectorships were:

Districts	*Year*	*Collector*
Rajmahal and Bhagalpur	1774	Barton
Ramgarh	1775	Heatly, First Civil Collector
Panchkot	1776	Hewitt
Saran	1779	Grame

At this time also the districts of Rangpur, Tripura and Midnapur were similarly formed into separate collectorships in Bengal. These alienations were followed by the complete abolition of provincial

councils in February 1781. The Governor-General and Council set up in their place at Calcutta, a committee of revenue consisting of four civil servants, David Anderson, John Shore, Samuel Charters and Charles Croftes. The object of this committee was to centralize the administration of revenue and bring the collections under the immediate control of the government at Calcutta. But no effective centralization could be possible without a strong, uniform and responsible district agency, which did not as yet exist. Hastings tried to build up just such an agency in 1772, but the orders of the Company stood in the way. It was now being fast realized that if the committee of revenue was to succeed, the government must make up its mind as to who was to administer the district: the Indian Naib or the European Collector.

The Company's able and experienced servants, such as John Shore, Stuart and others recommended that the system of 1772 be restored and that the Company's covenanted servants be appointed to every district with powers to administer both revenue and justice. But as wars with the Marathas and Mysore were still on, the implementation of the proposed reforms had to wait till 1786, when the directors of the Company approved the principles and ordered the restoration of Collectorships as a general plan of district administration. The firmness and vigour of British character, the Directors now suggested, might be employed to 'support the sovereignty of the Company and strengthen the executive authority of the government.' In their determination to restore all the Collectorships they were in fact guided by a belief and confidence in the ability and talents of their covenanted civil servants to protect the manufacturers, to encourage trade, to superintend the conduct of every district department, to keep a watchful eye on the principal natives, and to guard against the intrigues of foreigners. Motives of economy further led the Company to unite in the office of the Collector all the revenue, judicial as well as magisterial functions of government.

POLICE

Under the Moghals, magisterial duties formed part of the police administration in the district under the Faujdar. As his name implies, he was essentially a military commander placed at the head of a contingent of military police, there being no civil constabulary on the present model which was created in 1861. The district office was thus a military or police office, the Moghal State being itself a police State.

The Faujdar represented the official wing of the Moghal police administration. The non-official part of the system had its origin in the ancient institution of village watchmen, such as 'pasbans', 'goraits' or 'barahils' still found in several districts of Bihar. They were maintained by village communities through grant of lands. But following the disintegration of village communities, they transferred their loyalty to zamindars and farmers of revenue, their charges becoming part of the zamindari establishment under the heading 'chakaran' or service lands.

The zamindar's land servants were subordinate to the official 'faujdari' establishment of the district. 'The land servants or the ancient militia of the country,' observed Hastings, 'were under his (the zamindar's) immediate charge, and being distributed throughout the zamindari, enabled the zamindar to watch over its internal quiet, and to obtain information of whatever passed in any part of it, and so far the 'faujdari' jurisdiction is inherent in the zamindar. In the exercise of it he was subject to a Faujdar, who had the superintendence of a district comprehending many zamindaries and had the thanas or inferior stations under the charge of officers and armed men dependent on him, besides a part of the land servants of each zamindari, the rest being employed to guard the villages and enforce the collections. It was the zamindar's duty to give constant intelligence and to assist the Faujdar in the apprehension of robbers; but this duty first and immediately belonged to the Faujdar, who was the representative of the Nazim, and to him the people looked up for justice and protection even against their chiefs.' With the disruption of Moghal rule, however, the two systems began to work at cross-purposes, the non-official part growing increasingly independent of the official.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

What Hastings reconstituted in 1772 was the court of 'faujdari adālat' presided over by a 'daroga' or superintendent of criminal justice, not the establishment of the Faujdar who constituted the police wing of the 'nizamat' or criminal administration. It was in 1774 that he recommended the establishment of fourteen thanas, each under a Faujdar. In the following year, however, the 'nizamat' administration was transferred to Murshidabad and placed again under Muhammad Reza Khan who in 1776 introduced, with the approval of the government, a new plan for criminal justice and police.

Under this plan twenty-three courts of 'faujdari adālat' were established in 1776. Of these, only five were located in Bihar, one each at Bhagalpur, Kharagpur, Patna, Purnea and Rajmahal. The superintendent of the court was called a 'daroga' who was assisted by a deputy, a 'qāzī', a 'mufti' and a number of inferior officers. Bhagalpur, Rajmahal, Purnea and Patna were each given a faujdari thana with a certain number of 'chaukies' or inferior police stations. Provisions were made for only a 'chauki' for each of the sarkars of Saran, Champaran, Tirhut, Hajipur, Shahabad, Rohtas, Bihar and Monghyr. A 'chauki' usually contained twenty-five persons, including menials, on a monthly expenditure of Rs 214. The criminal courts established under the plan of 1776 enjoyed a wide range of discretionary authority in the process of trial and adjudication. This led to great abuses pointed out by Cornwallis in 1790.

Similarly, far from securing the execution of judicial decrees, the Faujdars could hardly shield themselves against the attacks of those in power and the influence of the Company. In September 1777, for instance, trouble arose between Shakarullah, the Faujdar of Tirhut, and one Imam Bakhsh, the Company's agent for saltpetre. The Faujdar had allotted a log of wood to one of the officers of the nizamat. Hearing that one of Imam Bakhsh's men was chopping up the wood with the assistance of a peon, he sent for them and informed them of the transaction. The woodcutter remained with the Faujdar, but the peon went away to inform his master, Imam Bakhsh. Accompanied by four to five hundred armed men, Imam Bakhsh proceeded to the Faujdar's court, pillaged it, robbed the treasury, dragged the Faujdar out, beat him severely and took him unconscious to his own house. Prisoners used this opportunity to escape from jail. Some people of the locality then interceded, got back the Faujdar and brought him to his residence!

It was in such circumstances that the office of the Faujdar was abolished in April 1781, and the judge of the civil court (diwani adālat) was appointed 'magistrate' to discharge his police duties of maintaining law and order, of apprehending criminals and committing them for trial to the 'faujdari adālat' of his district. The office of daroga or Muslim judge of the 'faujdari adālat', however, continued till 1790, when he too was replaced by a British civil servant.

CHANGES UNDER CORNWALLIS

On the arrival of Cornwallis in India, the Collector became all-

powerful. Though primarily responsible only for the collections of dues he became a civil judge as well as a magistrate in 1787. In 1793, however, things went to the other extreme. The Collector was divested of most of his authority and a system of administration based on the separation of powers was built up. All civil suits arising either from revenue or real property were transferred to the adjudication of civil courts presided over by separate judges. The 'mal adālats', which dealt with claims, actions or disputes connected with the management of revenue, were abolished. The duties of the Collector were limited to the settlement and collection of revenue and even here his conduct was watched by the judge of the civil court who also combined in his office the duties of a magistrate.

Cornwallis based his reforms on two main premises; partiality to zamindars from political motives and distrust of Indians as an administrative agency. His policy was to leave the zamindars in the 'quiet enjoyment of their profitable estates', so that they could have no motive for wanting a change or listening to any offers made to them by enemies of the Company. This perhaps explains why, in spite of the Company's advice to the contrary, he prohibited some revenue officers from resorting to minute local scrutiny to ascertain the resources of their districts, and why he made the settlement with the zamindars in perpetuity. The Collector of Bhagalpur, for instance, actually complained of not being permitted to proceed with the 'close and laborious examination of the mufassil papers.' Political motives in fact not only hastened the Permanent Settlement, especially in Bihar where the landholders had exhibited a rebellious attitude ever since Chait Singh's revolt in 1781, but also suggested to its author the expediency of divesting revenue authorities of the magisterial as well as of judicial functions even in respect of claims or disputes arising out of the management of revenue or the oppressive conduct of the landholders.

Cornwallis's distrust of Indians led to the Europeanization of the entire administrative machinery. For the trial of civil suits he did appoint native commissioners chosen from among the principal proprietors of land or from the merchants. Some of them acted as referees, some as arbitrators and still others as munsiffs, but all of them were paid by commission on the number of cases decided. They were not classed as officers of the government.

The administrative structure thus erected by Cornwallis produced results which cast doubts on the wisdom of his reforms. While the

Permanent Settlement placed the ryots at the mercy of the zamindars, the transfer of revenue suits to the civil court crippled the authority of the Collector who might have otherwise punished oppression, and rendered the judge's business too heavy for justice to be made quickly available to the oppressed. The Collector's sphere of influence became limited, and the judge became tied down to his table, with hardly any time to move out into the rural areas as magistrate and listen personally to the complaints of the people. In the absence of any civil charge corresponding to a tahsil or subdivision, the district officers could not have contact with the people except through the police, who had hardly any roots in the community since the establishment of the daroga system in 1792.

In the twenty years that followed 1793, the Governor-General in Council introduced several reforms to remedy the defects that were found out by experience. Revenue suits, for instance, were transferred for enquiry and report to the Collector; provisions were made for speedy disposal of summary suits arising from forcible possession of property. By one of the regulations of 1810, persons other than civil judges were appointed to act as magistrates under the name of joint or assistant magistrates. Institution fees were imposed to discourage litigation, and the constitution of courts was so modified as to invest subordinate courts with increased local powers to dispose of most of the cases.

The End of the Company's Trade Monopoly

In the period between 1813 and 1833, two major influences worked to shape the policy and character of administration. These were: (*i*) the rise of Free Trade, and (*ii*) the growth of Utilitarian Liberalism. While the first ended the trade monopoly of the Company and converted it into a purely administrative apparatus, the second recognized the legitimate aspirations of Indians and supplied a philosophy which encouraged increasing association between the government and educational and social reforms. Both these influences in fact tended to rationalize administration and to extend the spheres of the State's activity slightly beyond its normal limits, inspite of the financial stringencies caused by the Company's major wars with the Marathas and the Burmese.

One of the important reforms effected during this period related to the increasing use of Indian agency in the administration of civil justice. Sadr amins and others who were appointed came to be

called judicial officers of the Government and were no longer paid only by commission. Their powers were defined and their jurisdictions fixed.

The idea of transferring the cognizance of boundary disputes or the trial of rent suits to the Collector clashed with the principles and system established by Cornwallis in 1793. But the exigencies of settlement operations in the Western Provinces proved beyond doubt the inexpediency of that system. The provisions of Regulation VII of 1822, which empowered the Collector in the 'North-Western Provinces' to hear, try and determine all such cases as rose in the course of their settlement proceedings, therefore, extended in 1825 to the 'khas mahals, of Bihar, to the hilly tracts of Bhagalpur as well as to all other waste lands which were not specifically included within the limits of the permanently-settled areas. Earlier, in 1824, the Collector was authorized, subject to a regular suit in the civil court, to determine summarily all rent suits. Regulation VIII of 1831 finally took away the powers of the civil courts to entertain any claims of rent unless the complaint was preferred as a regular civil suit in that court. The Collector thus regained in respect of revenue or rent-suits the powers first vested in him in 1781, when a distinction had been drawn between these and regular civil or title-suits.

SEPARATION OF THE JUDICIARY

The separation of the offices of judge and magistrate was first taken into serious consideration by Lord Moira in 1815, but financial reasons stood in the way. In 1821, Thomas Munro raised the question again and, in support of his proposal to unite the magistracy with the office of the Collector, pointed out that in India 'whoever regulated the assessment of the land, really holds in his hands the mainspring of the country.' In 1823 the magistracy was actually separated from the judge's office in the districts of Purnea, Tirhut and Jangal Mahals in Bihar, and of Hugli, Jessore, Rangpur and Nadia in Bengal. The consensus of opinion supported this measure even on a general principle. But what should be the form of the district administration, once the two functions were completely separated? It was here that opinions differed. The Directors for financial reasons favoured the union of the magistracy with the Collector's office. But the Bengal government regarded the proposed union as 'a very extensive innovation... and a violation of the principle by which the civil administration framed by Cornwallis in 1793 was regulated.'

Financial and administrative considerations combined to shape the final decision. In many of the districts the Collector was re-invested with the powers of a magistrate in July 1831. The operation of this principle extended to several other districts in 1833.

On the criminal side, the magistrate acted till 1787 as a purely police functionary. Under one of the regulations of that year he was authorized to hear and determine, without reference to a criminal court, complaints about petty offences such as abusive language, minor assaults or affrays, and to punish the same by flogging or imprisonment not exceeding fifteen days or by fine not exceeding 200 rupees.

In the districts, the darogas of the criminal courts were abolished and in their place four circuit courts were provided, one for each of the divisions of Patna, Calcutta, Murshidabad and Dacca. The judges of these courts were to make two circuits in the year and to hold two gaol deliveries at the headquarters of each magistrate, where they were to stay until persons committed or held on bail for trial by the magistrate were duly tried and sentenced with the assistance of qāzīs and muftis acting as law officers. The circuit judges, such as the 'sadr nizamat adālat', also exercised appellate jurisdiction in civil cases in their capacity as provincial courts of appeal. The Govenor-General and certain members of his council began to function as 'sadr nizamat adālats'.

THE DAROGAS

Cornwallis's daroga system was designed to represent the might of the government in rural areas, where the zamindars had previously constituted, by virtue of their exercising police jurisdiction, small pockets of local influence tending to militate against the rights of sovereignty and containing germs of future rebellion. In a minute of 2 October 1815, the Governor-General (Lord Moira) clearly acknowledged that the establishment of darogas had been 'devised exclusively with the view of strengthening the arm of the magistrate.' But although in favour of continuing the official system, Moira strongly opposed the extension of the regular stipendiary police beyond the establishment of the darogas. He held that the 'chaukidari' system in rural areas 'should arise out of the society and be subservient to it' through the agency of its own delegates. He added that if the 'chaukidars' were made stipendiary servants of the government, they would behave as 'masters' of the people and that 'an authority

would be established, pregnant with the most odious tyranny.' The appointment of such 'chaukidars' was thus restricted to district headquarters.

Because of the extensive powers and low pay given to darogas under Regulation XXII of 1793, they became corrupt and misused their authority on the plea of exacting co-operation from the respectable members of the local communities. To reform this inferior organ of the official police, the Governor-General in Council defined and specified the duties and powers of darogas under Regulation XX of 1817, which is regarded as the first police manual ever drawn up for the guidance of their conduct.

GROWING POWER OF THE MAGISTRATES

The main feature of the reforms in the office of the magistrate after 1793 was a progressive increase of his judicial and executive authority. By 1807 he was empowered to punish crimes by imprisonment for a maximum period of one year, which was extended to two years in 1818. More and more crime came under his jurisdiction in order to render quicker and cheaper justice. Regulation VII of 1816 authorized him to appoint and transfer darogas. In exercising his powers he used to suspend and even dismiss them without any reference to the circuit judges.

A Superintendent of Police was appointed in 1808 to co-ordinate with the magistrates and to exercise concurrent jurisdiction with them in the police administration of the Calcutta, Dacca and Murshidabad divisions. This arrangement was extended to the Patna division in 1810. In 1829 the office of the Superintendent of Police was abolished. His duties and powers were vested in the Divisional Commissioners of Revenue, appointed under Regulation I of that year, to act also as circuit judges. By 1835 many of the circuit courts were abolished and their duties transferred to the district judges. The police duties of the Divisional Commissioners, however, still continued. Doubtless an enactment of 1837 authorized the government to appoint Superintendents of Police for any of the districts or part of a province, but this was hardly made use of. The police reforms of 1861 provided for the appointment of an Inspector-General of Police and a Deputy Inspector-General in addition to a Superintendent of Police for each district.

ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Another feature of the criminal administration in the period after

1793 was the gradual increase in the powers of the subordinate courts. Its necessity arose from an increase in the load of illegal business and delay in the disposal of criminal justice. We have already referred to the gradual increase in the judicial powers of the magistrate.

On the abolition of the circuit courts in 1829, the Commissioners of Revenue took over their duties. But as this combination of duty proved too heavy for a single charge, Regulation VII of 1831 permitted the government to invest the zillah and city judges, who were not magistrates, with powers to hold monthly sessions of gaol delivery within their respective jurisdictions. A judge vested with such powers was designated a Sessions Judge.

The Muhammadan criminal law which till then governed the administration of criminal justice, was considerably modified between 1793 and 1833. Several considerations combined to effect such modifications from time to time. In 1832 parties concerned were permitted to have their cases tried by a jury, a mode of trial which fundamentally modified the then current legal system.

THE DISTRICT—THE REAL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

By the time William Bentinck laid down his office (1835), the principles on which Cornwallis regulated his administrative system were very largely repudiated. Indians were called to certain higher judicial and revenue offices with increased powers and higher salaries. On the executive side, an Act of 1843 provided for the appointment of uncovenanted deputy magistrates, the object being to recruit Indians and associate them with the general administration of the country. The district became a real administrative unit, and the Collector became the district officer authorized to exercise a certain measure of judicial functions in revenue and criminal cases. He became Magistrate-Collector. It is true that this union of duties for a time received a set-back. In 1837 the burden of resumption proceedings, which engaged the exclusive attention of the Collector, led to a gradual separation of the two functions, which continued till 1845 when it was finally completed in all the districts of Bihar. But again in 1859, they were re-united and this union exists even to some extent to-day.

In matters of land-revenue administration, too, Cornwallis's system was no less modified. In fact, it was here that the expediency of a radical change was first realized and the administrative changes we have noticed in the preceding pages followed as a natural sequence.

THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT

Apart from the increase in litigation and crime arising from the absence of proper records of rights, the Permanent Settlement working for hardly ten years, brought to light two important defects in the system. In the meanwhile, the Directors of the Company were influenced by the writings of contemporary leaders of economic and political thought, who decried the commercial approach to administration and advocated that the scope of the State's activity should extend beyond the narrow bounds of its normative functions. In the field of revenue administration, this clearly signified that the Company's government should contribute to the promotion of agriculture and the protection of agricultural interests. This they could do by moderate participation with the landholders in the augmentation of rent subsequent upon improvement of lands and by a determination, through survey, of the respective rights of landholders and tenants.

But as the Permanent Settlement secured for the landholders the entire advantage of a rise in rentals, and as the expenses involved in the provision and maintenance of irrigational and other facilities were to be the exclusive responsibility of the government, the Company warned the Governor-General in Council against the repetition of the error committed in the presidency of Bengal, where they had fixed in perpetuity their demand without renouncing their obligations or defining the respective rights of the agricultural classes. For the ceded and conquered districts of the Western or Upper Provinces, therefore, they ordered a periodical settlement with the actual proprietors of land.

Again, in the permanently-settled areas the government had to sustain loss 'from a gradual and increasing depreciation in the value of money.' In keeping with the views of liberal economists the Directors of the Company, therefore, suggested that if in the newly acquired, ceded and conquered districts of the Upper Provinces terms of settlement were fixed, say for ten to twenty years, and renewed for the same period subject to augmentation in assessment, it would 'give to the rule of settlement the character of a perpetual and unalterable regulation on what may be called a fundamental law of the commonwealth rather than a tax to be levied according to a certain valuation.'

The considerations led the Company to reject the proposals of the Bengal Government in connexion with other parts of India. But once the Directors said, 'no' to the avowed policy of Bengal, the necessity

immediately arose for the conduct of a detailed survey, before any assessment could finally be agreed upon. The enquiries indeed revealed many things. They brought to light complexities of land tenures, varieties of agricultural interests, as well as numerous instances, where the actual proprietors of land had in the very first decade of British rule (1801-10) been dispossessed through illegal manipulation of fictitious balances. These periodical enquiries every three or five years, also established beyond doubt, the inadequacy of the powers of superior revenue officers who could neither check abuses nor speed up settlement proceedings for want of proper authority.

Such a state of affairs naturally cried out for a reversal of Cornwallis's system. The Governor-General in Council had thus to enact a number of measures designed to modify the organizational structure and the functional character of revenue authorities. Organizationally, the authority of the Board of Revenue established in 1786 was from time to time decentralized and its territorial jurisdiction reduced to facilitate local control and direction.

The New Revenue Policy

For the execution of their new policy the Company had in fact to send out a new Governor-General, Lord Moira (1813-23), who immediately ordered a detailed enquiry into the state of the internal administration of the districts. In the light of reports received from the districts (available in the Commonwealth Relations Office Archives, London), he revived the office of 'kanungoes' (1816-7), reorganized the institution of village 'patwaris' (1817), transferred the office of the Surveyor-General to the control of civil administration (1819) and introduced a system of land survey even of the Khas Mahals, the unsettled areas of Bihar and Bengal.

The execution of the new revenue policy also necessitated a reorganization of the Board of Revenue to facilitate local supervision and control. Lord Moira, therefore, in 1817 set up a separate Board of Commissioners for Bihar and Banaras, with a jurisdiction extending over the eastern districts of Dinajpur and Rangpur. In 1819 he transferred both these districts to the control of the Board of Revenue at Calcutta. The district of Gorakhpur came under the Board for Bihar and Banaras. Another Board was set up for the Western Provinces. A rearrangement of Boards took place in 1822 under Regulation III of that year, but the nature of their functions remained the same.

However, on account of the extensive territories placed under each of these Boards, they could not cope with the volume of work. In one of his minutes of 10 December 1828, Holt Mackenzie, then Secretary to the Government in the Territorial Department, deplored the frequency with which cases of defalcation and embezzlement of public money occurred in the districts. The need for effective local supervision was felt all the more in the Western Provinces where the Collectors were engaged in detailed enquiries affecting the interest of both government and the agricultural communities.

These circumstances suggested the necessity for dividing the whole of the centrally-administered territory excepting Delhi, which was placed under a separate Commissioner, into twenty Divisions each under a Commissioner of Revenue who, for financial motives, combined in his office the duties and powers previously exercised by the Circuit Court and the Superintendent of Police. The Sessions' duties, as we have seen, were subsequently transferred to the District Judges and police duties to the District Superintendent of Police.

Under the arrangements made in 1829, three Commissionerships were created out of the districts at present included in Bihar. The first was that of Saran comprising the districts of Saran and Champaran, Shahabad, and Tirhut; the second was that of Patna including the districts of Patna, Bihar and Ramgarh; while the third consisted of Bhagalpur (with Monghyr) and the Purnea and Maldah districts. Later, in 1834, however, the Saran Division was abolished and this district along with Shahabad was absorbed in the Patna Division, while Tirhut was added to Bhagalpur. Another re-arrangement took place in 1855, when the creation of a new non-regulation district of the Santhal Parganas under the Bhagalpur Division led to the separation of Tirhut, which was placed under the Commissioner, Patna Division. A third Division of Chotanagpur was created in 1854 for administrative convenience. These arrangements continued up to 1908, when a separate Tirhut Division came into being with the districts of Saran, Champaran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga.

The controlling and supervisory duties of the Board of Revenue remained practically unaltered after 1788, when the Governor-General in Council invested the Collectors with the executive details of settlement and collection. The controversy which later arose, related to the expediency or otherwise of the exercise of the judicial powers vested in them before the abolition of 'mal adālats'

in 1793. Though reticent in the beginning, opinions grew increasingly in favour of re-investing the revenue authorities with the determination of such cases as arose in the course of collection or settlement. The Governor-General in Council appreciated the urgency of such a measure when Holt Mackenzie, Territorial Secretary, brought to the notice of the Council several cases in which the inferior officers of the Court had manipulated through fraudulent, though legally valid, sales the alienation of lands belonging to several respectable families. In a monumental memorandum of 764 paragraphs, Holt Mackenzie proved the incapacity of the ordinary courts of law to bring any relief to the sufferers against the mischief of Tahsildars and their nominal sureties, and pointed out that as the officers of the court themselves were either 'parties to the fraud or nearly connected with them,' the proprietors, especially of Allahabad, looked forward 'to the termination of the British Government for the recovery of their estates from the consequent termination of the influence through which they (had) lost.'

Following the recommendations made by Holt Mackenzie, the Government appointed, under Regulation I of 1821, a Special Commission with powers to revise all cases of fraudulent dispossession, without observing the established technicalities of the judicial process, or even caring for the ordinary pleadings, or the formalities of stamp papers. The judges of the 'sadr diwani adālat' opposed the enactment which, they argued, suspended the functions of the established courts of law and compromised by an act of Government, the faith of Government guaranteeing purchases made to satisfy, under express sanction, their own demand of revenues. Despite their opposition, this regulation was enacted and a Special Commission set up to undo the social injustice done between the years 1801 and 1810. Later, in 1829, the Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit were authorized to hear and determine all claims of the nature specified by Regulation I of 1821, and the cause of action of which might have arisen at any time previous to March 1829.

The principle which induced Government to constitute the Special Commission influenced the character of Regulation VII of 1822, which introduced the Mahalwari System in the Western districts, authorizing the Collectors to try and determine, subject to a regular suit in a civil court, claims to property and possession of lands, arising in the course of survey and settlement. Once this mode of administration was recognized as sound in principle, its operation as a general

pattern became a matter of course. It extended to Bihar in the survey and settlement of such lands as were not specifically included in the Permanent Settlement. The 'Thakbust' Survey of Bihar (1843-9) was again another extension of the experiment tried in the Upper Provinces on the same principle of assessment based on survey and established records of rights.

The introduction of periodical assessment in the Western districts thus not only checked the extension of the Permanent Settlement, but also offered opportunities to civil servants to acquire in the course of their local researches a degree of knowledge and experience which was used by the government in the modification of Cornwallis's pattern. The exigencies of periodical assessment also dictated the necessity for an executive machinery in the districts as well as for executive action on the part of civil servants. These developed in the Upper Provinces to an extent never ever required by their counterparts in the permanently-settled areas. In the latter areas, they allowed themselves to be guided more by judicial considerations than by executive action. In spite of its modification, Cornwallis's Code left a trail of judicial dominance which operated as a check on the executive officers in Bihar and Bengal.

Summing up the underlying principles of the Company's administration, it is not far from the truth to say, that as a typical trading corporation, they insisted on integration of power in the districts and control by boards at the top. They tried to mitigate the effects of free trade on indigenous industries and used restraint in matters of religious controversy, especially in the earlier period. Even on questions of western education, they advised moderation and proceeded with caution, lest its introduction in India be misconstrued as a step towards evangelization. It is true that Cornwallis acted otherwise. He built up a system founded on the separation of executive and judicial powers. But it was contrary to the characteristic policy of the Company as well as to the administrative traditions of the country. It was therefore not long before the rulers realized the error and took measures to remedy it.

However, new circumstances developed, especially towards the later period of the Company's rule. By 1833, they lost all their rights of monopoly and became a purely administrative corporation, acting on behalf of the Crown, but interested now chiefly in recovering from the Indian revenues the entire value of their assets according to stipulations under the Charter Act of that year.

After 1833 the Company began to care more for their stipulated money than for the improvement of administration. Free traders and Christian Missions, on the other hand, began to pour into India with relatively increased freedom; and the Company's civil servants who had till then maintained religious neutrality took pride in openly propagating Christianity. While the traders affected the economy of the country, the missionaries aroused the suspicion of the people. Economic exploitation and apprehension regarding a cultural invasion combined to precipitate a political crisis which, in the absence of any political organization, expressed itself through deep disaffection in the army and furnished the cause for the upheaval of 1857. The contemporary feudal elements whose interests suffered on account of the Company's land policy, also saw in this a good opportunity to revolt.

The East India Company came to an end in 1858. The Government of India was transferred to the Crown and constitutional provision was made for the appointment of a Secretary of State for India in Council who replaced the Board of Control. Apparently this transfer of control seemed to be a mere change of hands. But the experiences of the Indian revolt of 1857 and the harmful results of free trade which had begun to operate in the public affairs of India, moulded the form and modified the attitude of the government in a manner that made all the difference. Whereas the trovel dictated the necessity of encouraging the European population to serve as a bulwark to buttress British rule in India, free trade introduced and developed foreign capitalist enterprise. Whatever the other effects may have been, these two main post-revolt trends contributed to the development of representative institutions on the one hand and of specialization and efficiency in the organization and methods of administration on the other.

But as the revolt seriously strained the finances of the government, economic considerations ruled supreme, especially in the administration of Bengal. Although too difficult and extensive for a single charge, the provinces of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Assam remained for a considerable period under a Lieutenant-Governor. In 1874 relief was first afforded by constituting Assam a separate province under a Chief Commissioner, while the remaining three provinces continued under the single charge of a Lieutenant-Governor until 1905.

Considering the utter neglect to which the eastern districts of

Bengal had been subject for several decades and the utter inadequacy of the civil and police staff in looking after their thickly populated and vast rural areas, inhabited chiefly by poor Muslim agriculturists and backward Hindus, Lord Curzon augumented the strength of their administrative staff and effected his ill-fated partition in 1905 to enable district and other officers to come into easy contact with the people and win their sympathies for the Government. Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam were split up into two separate provinces under Lieutenant-Governors; one province consisting of Western Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the other of Eastern Bengal and Assam. Even then it was pretty common for European planters to ill-treat and sometimes even to cause the death of Indian coolies especially in Assam. The Lieutenant-Governor could not help it and they escaped with impunity in most cases. In 1910, Western Bengal was given an Executive Council. But Eastern Bengal and Assam remained without any such Council.

Lord Curzon's arrangement in the meantime excited great agitation and hostility among the educated middle-class Bengali Hindus and this agitation spread throughout India. In the Legislative Councils of both Bengal and Eastern Bengal 'they found themselves in a minority, being outnumbered in the one by Biharis and Oriyas and in the other by Muhammadans of Eastern Bengal and the inhabitants of Assam.' Ultimately the partition was set aside and a new arrangement announced by His Imperial Majesty on 12 December 1911. It came into operation on 1 April 1912. Bihar and Orissa were dissociated and formed into a separate province with a Lieutenant-Governor in Council. Assam was entrusted to a Chief Commissioner and thus restored to its position of 1874. The Bengali-speaking divisions were grouped together to constitute the province of Bengal which became the charge of a Governor in Council.

In the formation of this new scheme, the main considerations were to provide compact administrative units; to satisfy what came to be regarded as the legitimate demands of the Bengalis; to recognize the aspirations of the Muhammadans of Eastern Bengal, and finally, to broad-base the whole plan of redistribution on the general principle of 'political and administrative expediency', so as to discourage 'the presumption that it has been exacted by clamour or agitation.'

Cultural and linguistic motives did count to some extent in the

dissociation of Bihar from Bengal. But an important object underlying this separation was to enable the Governor of Bengal to do justice to the territories assigned to his control and to safeguard the interests of the Muhammadans of his province, a task which it would not have been humanly possible for him to accomplish, if he had been overburdened as before by the addition of Bihar and Orissa. Administrative exigencies demanded decentralization, which was provided by the creation of a separate administration for Bihar and Orissa. The agitation of 'Bihar for the Biharis' which was kept up in connexion with the distribution of offices and appointments, contributed to a great extent to the creation of the province of Bihar. Orissa was added to Bihar because Oriyas had little in common with the Bengalis, and the arrangement thus made provided a seaboard for Bihar for the time being. With the introduction of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms in 1912, the Lieutenant-Governor became Governor and Lord Sinha became the first Governor of Bihar.

But the principles on which Bihar and Orissa were separated from Bengal in 1912 later contributed to the separation of Orissa from Bihar. Bihar welcomed this separation which was effected under section 289 of the Government of India Act, 1935. Orissa became a separate province on 1 April 1936.

The Secretariat organization of the Company's Government in Bengal originally proceeded on a pattern dictated by commercial requirements. Before 1756, for instance, the business of their President and Council was transacted in a single department with the help of a secretary and a few assistants. The secretary used to open the packets received from Europe and place them before the Council for orders and instructions. His duty was also to catalogue the standing orders and instructions of the Company and to place them regularly before the Council for proper guidance. All diaries and consultations on trade or transactions with parties in the country were entered in a single book, irrespective of whether they were of a public or secret nature. The early secretariat was located near the Warehouse at Fort William.

The magnitude of departmental organizations developed from these petty beginnings, and expanded with the growth of the Company's varied transactions as well as political and administrative exigencies. Siraj-ud-daula's attack on Calcutta, for example showed for the first time the necessity of maintaining secrecy in certain proceedings and the creation of a secret department, which was

entrusted for a time to a select committee of the Council. The Company's war with Mir Kasim in 1763 led to the appointment of an assistant secretary and two sub-secretaries. But the size of the Secretariat staff remained practically unaltered except with the addition of what were then known as 'monthly writers' who later in the nineteenth century were classified as non-covenanted civil servants and absorbed by provincial cadres. The status of the secretary, too, continued to be much the same. His salary was about 300 rupees and, as life in the Secretariat at Calcutta was costlier, his office was in a state of constant change depending as it did for the most part on the young, inexperienced, and fresh arrivals from Europe.

There was a considerable augmentation in the bulk of the Secretariat's business in the course of the Maratha and Mysore wars (1776-84), and in addition to a Revenue Department, already established in 1772, and a Military Department in 1776, Hastings constituted a separate Department of Inspection to suggest measures for retrenchment in 1784. He also reorganized the Public and Secret Departments on a footing adequate enough to cope with the increased volume of business.

Cornwallis introduced a new feature into the organization of the Secretariat, namely the concentration of all power in the hands of what he styled the Secretary-General appointed under Article XII of 26 Geo. 3, C. 16 which required that all orders and proceedings of Government should be declared to have been made by the Governor-General in Council, and that these, previous to their being published, should be signed by the Chief Secretary to the Government or his Deputy for the time being, by the authority of the Governor-General in Council. The salary of the Secretary-General was fixed at 50,000 rupees per annum, including all emoluments.

Wellesley (1798-1805) reconstituted the Central Secretariat on a model which not only subsisted throughout the Company's rule, but came to stay as a permanent feature in the history of the Secretariat organization both at the centre and in the provinces of India. Under Wellesley's plan the Secretary-General was denominated in 1799 as Chief Secretary and the Sub-Secretary as Secretary. While the annual salary of the former was to be 55,000 rupees, that of the latter was fixed at 50,000. The execution of details was entrusted to the office of the individual secretaries who became 'exclusively and avowedly responsible for the transaction of the business of their

respective Departments, excepting in the cases in which any part of the business might be performed by the Chief Secretary, either in virtue of his general authority as the head of the office, or in consequence of special directions from the Governor-General acting upon his own authority under the general control vested in him by law.'

Wellesley's reforms indeed marked a turning point in the history of the Central Secretariat. Inspired by the zeal of founding an empire in India, he established a college at Fort William to give the requisite education to his civil servants. He also reconstituted his Secretariat on a principle adequate to the magnitude of his ambition. Instead of being confined to routine work, the duties of his Secretaries extended to research and planning. Therefore, in selecting them he was guided purely by considerations of honesty and uprightness, ability and talent. In course of time, a pattern of the Central Secretariat was evolved which subsists even to-day.

At the time of its separation from Bengal in 1912, the province of Bihar and Orissa was provided with three Secretaries (inclusive of the Chief Secretary), excluding the Public Works Department which functioned under two separate engineers acting as ex-officio secretaries. In addition, there were eleven Heads of Departments. Each of the three secretaries were in charge of three or four Departments. The Chief Secretary himself managed three of them, namely, Appointment, Political with Police and Miscellaneous branches, and Education. In 1919, a temporary secretary was appointed to look after Education and Municipal affairs. But this relief was soon discontinued and no major change took place before the Montague-Chelmsford reforms were introduced in 1921.

The establishment of provincial autonomy offered opportunity for the first time to push forward plans of development. Many of the plans originated from Lord Curzon who had in the beginning of the century formulated them in concrete and precise form, especially in respect of agriculture, industries, education, and medical relief; but the imperialist interest of the Home Government stood in the way and delayed their execution, particularly where industries were concerned. With the appointment of the Indian Ministry in 1921, development services naturally engaged the attention of the Government to an extent hardly ever known before. The number of secretaries rose to six. The Chief Secretary was in charge of the Appointment and Political Departments; the Finance Secretary

of the Finance and Excise Departments; the Revenue Secretary of Revenue, Commerce and Development; the Judicial Secretary of the Judicial Department; the Education Secretary of the Education, Archaeology, Ecclesiastical and Registration Departments and the Local Self-Government Secretary of the Local Self-Government, Sanitation, Medical and Jail Departments. In addition, a separate Secretary was appointed to the Legislative Council, and when in 1930 the Legislative Department was separated from the Legislative Council, it became a regular Legislative Department. It was combined with the Judicial Department in 1953, and the combined Department was called the Law Department. Reshuffling also took place in other departments in 1922 and 1927, but these were not of major importance.

In recent years, the reorganization of the Bihar Secretariat had been guided mainly by considerations to meet problems arising from the exigencies of the last war, the partition of India and the consequent movement of population from one part of the country to another, and lastly from the needs of planning for development and social welfare. The Departments created to satisfy these are Supply and Price Control (1944), Welfare (1946), Relief and Rehabilitation (1947), Labour (1947), The Kosi Project (1954) and Housing (1955). In addition, there are now eighteen Amalgamated Departments.

The question of the separation of judicial and executive functions has always been one of the most important issues in administration. In Bihar, the case of functional separation was specially weak. The Committee appointed in 1921 to formulate a scheme for the separation of judicial and executive functions, unequivocally declared that whatever may be said of Bengal where the agitation for the separation originated, the people of this province (Bihar and Orissa) as a whole 'look to the District Officer as their protector and if his power is destroyed they will be at the mercy of the unscrupulous subordinate amla.' The vast expanse of rural population with a very small percentage of educated people and a peculiar economic and agricultural organization, especially in the wild tracts of Chotanagpur and the Santhal Parganas, necessitated the continuance of the existing system to secure the protection of 'a large landless population and a rackrented tenantry'. An important effect, however, of the continued demand for separation was that in the exercise of their judicial powers the Magistrates became responsible to the District and Sessions Judges and through them to the High Courts.

On their accession to power in 1947, the Congress Government of Bihar took a step forward by separating the Judiciary from the Executive in six of their advanced districts. Amenable to the pressure of public opinion as a democratic institution, they were guided in this decision in no less a degree by considerations of efficiency and despatch in the conduct of judicial business. But this separation is in no way intended to reduce the importance of the District Office, especially where law and order are concerned. The Second Five-Year Plan in fact invests the District Officer with the entire responsibility of securing the implementation of the Plan in the various fields of development. In addition to police and general administration, his immediate authority extends to all the development departments operating in his district. Except in the administration of criminal justice in the districts, where the judicial and executive functions have been separated, his present position corresponds to the ideal laid down by James Stephen, the Law Member of the Government of India, who in a minute recorded in 1870 observed: 'within their own limits and as regards the population of their own districts, the District Officers are the Government, and they ought, I think, to continue to be so.'

In point of developing the subdivisional system and establishing smaller administrative units, too, Bihar has been making appreciable progress. In 1947, the State Government appointed an Administrative Reorganization Officer to examine the question of reorganizing the districts and subdivisions for administrative convenience. They subsequently added a new district and created a few more subdivisions, in addition to smaller administrative units called 'anchals' to facilitate more intimate contact with the people as well as to have more of the petty details locally disposed off. The exigencies of planning may dictate the necessity for a further reduction of large districts and subdivisions with a gradual transfer to Subdivisional Officers of the controlling authority vested at present in District Officers. But a more serious consideration than this may have to be given to the problem of recruitment, training and general education, especially of the superior controlling officers, in a manner adequate enough to secure the fulfilment of the new obligations of the Welfare State. The emphasis at present laid on the acquisition of mere informational discipline may have to be modified, to enable our graduates to acquire discipline in the mode and process of thinking.

Another important step in the field of administrative reform in Bihar is the establishment of village panchayats by the present Government. It is not within the scope of this survey to examine its merit in any detail; nor is it possible here to analyse the recommendations made in this regard by the Royal Commission on Decentralization. It is enough for our purpose to say that it is really a radical step contributing to the growth of rural self-government in Bihar's villages. The want of complete success of efforts made so far is due chiefly to the fact that in the course of the British rule in India hardly any attempts were made to build up from the bottom, with the result that rural institutions, especially in Bihar and Bengal, lost most of their vigour and initiative under capitalist and imperialist impact as well as under the influence of the Permanent Settlement. The consciousness of the effects of British rule in fact led even the Decentralization Commission to recommend that 'it was most desirable alike in the interest of decentralization and in order to associate the people with the local tasks of administration, that an attempt should be made to constitute and develop village panchayats for the administration of local village affairs.' To successfully carry out this recommendation, they clearly suggested that there should be only a minimum of official connexion, with a scant regard for the observance of even simple rules prescribed for the transaction of their business. They also defined the scope of their functions which conform largely to the provisions of the Panchayat Raj Act of Bihar.

This analysis of Bihar's administration, brief and sketchy though it may be, has a few historical lessons to offer. It shows that there is a continuity and sequence in the growth of institutions; that administrative efficiency flows from specialized services but that co-ordinating and controlling agencies at superior levels, must on no account suffer either from ignorance arising from specialization, or from want of authority arising from a complete separation of judicial and fiscal functions, especially in a rural State like Bihar, where the person in charge of land revenue has generally the responsibility of protecting the peasantry; that with the expansion in scope of the State's activity there develops a need for increasing decentralization in the agency for the exercise of administrative function as well as a reduction in the territorial jurisdiction of administrative units; and, finally, that a decentralized local administration with a strong controlling centre is a pattern which grew in the process of modern

history in India and which we have to reckon with in any work of administrative reorganization. The recent administrative reforms of the Bihar Government have to be judged from these perspectives.



XVIII

FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN BIHAR 1857-1947

BIHAR'S role in the history of India's struggle for freedom has been honourable and highly significant.

It is intended to give an outline of it here in the full knowledge that ending the British rule in India was a mighty undertaking and the whole of India exerted its utmost in this direction for close upon a century. It may be said that India had never reconciled herself with slavery, and occasional risings here and there were proof of this fact. But it required a long struggle to regain her lost independence.

The verdict of Plassey (23 June 1757) was in favour of the East India Company. But rising British supremacy was challenged in the course of a few years, first by Mīr Qasim alone (1762-3), and again in 1764 by a confederacy of three allies, Mīr Qasim, Suja-ud-daula, the Nawab of Oudh, and Shah Alam II, Emperor of Delhi. The conjunction of some favourable circumstances helped the British to overpower the allied powers at Buxar on 23 October 1764. Buxar supplemented the victory of Plassey in 'riveting the shackles of the Company's rule upon Bengal and Bihar.'

For a century after this, the expansion of the British dominion in India and the growth of an Indo-British administrative system, carried India through manifold processes of transition: political, economic, social and cultural. This, for various reasons, generated forces of discontent and there were occasionally open manifestations in the form of anti-British outbreaks in different parts of this vast country including Bihar.

The insurrection of Raja Chait Singh of Banaras had repercussions on the contiguous province of Bihar. Some of the Bihar zamindars, discontented with the Company, rose against it and espoused the cause of Chait Singh. Similarly after the treaty of 21 January 1798,

between the East India Company and Saadat Ali of Oudh, by which the latter was recognized as the Nawab of Oudh, Wazir Ali, another claimant to the masnad of Oudh, was sent to Banaras to live there as a pensioner. Discontented with his lot, Wazir Ali planned an all-India conspiracy against the British and had some confederates in Bihar, including Raja Mitrajit Singh of Tikari.

In fact, there was a strong undercurrent of discontent in Bihar against the East India Company even before 1857. In 1845-6, when in the course of the First Anglo-Sikh War, the British were faced with a grave situation due to the stubborn and formidable resistance of the Sikh Army, and 'all the resources of the (Company's) Government' were being drawn to the North-Western Frontier, there was a plan at Patna to assail and uproot their authority. Referring to it, a British military officer wrote in 1857: 'Even so lately as 1846, its (Patna's) Mohamedan nobility had endeavoured to take advantage of our balanced fortunes on the banks of the Sutlej. They had then succeeded in corrupting some of the native officers and sepoys stationed at Dinapore.' William Tayler, Commissioner till August 1857 of the Patna Division (24,000 square miles and five million people), referred to it thus: 'For some years past, this city (Patna) has been considered a very sink of disaffection and intrigue. In 1846, a dangerous plot was detected, in which many of the Mohamedans of Patna, and the neighbouring districts were concerned and in which attempts had been made to tamper with the Sepoys... That the conspiracy of 1846 was but a branch of a more general plot is the opinion of many who are well acquainted with the country, and that the object of that conspiracy was the destruction of the English, the overthrow of the British Government and the re-establishment of a Mohamedan dynasty, is, I imagine beyond all doubt.'

It is significant to note on the authority of recently discovered evidence, that Babu Kunwar (Koer) Singh of Jagdishpur, the Bihar hero of 1857-9, was also suspected by the British of being involved in this anti-British plot of 1845-6. The Magistrate of Patna, while giving an account of it to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal in his letter, dated 27 December 1857, noted: 'I have received information that Babu Koomar Singh, one of the most influential Zamindars in the neighbourhood and a resident in the Shahabad district, is supposd to be also implicated in this conspiracy; it is a well known fact that this Baboo during the late excitements,

on account of the prisoners, came to this city (Patna) and was in communication with Rahut Alee.' 'I have received letters,' communicated Mr Elphinstone Jackson, officiating Magistrate of Shahabad, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, on 23 January 1846, 'containing the information that Baboo Koour Singh, a most influential Zemindar in this district and a man most highly popular with all the inhabitants of Arrah and other towns of Shahabad, is suspected of being leagued with the Patna conspirators and that letters bearing his seal have been discovered clearly proving his guilt.' The Bengal Government did not approve of Kunwar Singh's arrest apprehending that it 'may have the effect of exciting the people to opposition.'

There was discontent and open rebellion also among some of the Adivasis of Chotanagpur and among the Santhals. Thus in 1831-2, smouldering discontent found expression in a rising of the Kols in Chotanagpur. More formidable than this was the movement organized by the Santhals in 1855-7 in a wide area extending from the vicinity of Burdwan to Bhagalpur, under the leadership of four brothers, Sidhu, Kanhu, Chand and Bhoirab, who were inhabitants of the village Bhagnadihi near Barhait in the heart of the Damin area of the Rajmahal subdivision of the district of Santhal Parganas. Its causes were deeply rooted in the changing conditions of that period and its suppression put enormous strain on the resources of the Company.

Referring to the prevailing feeling of discontent against the Company's Government, William Tayler, officiating Commissioner of Patna, communicated to W. Grey, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, on 27 June 1855 as follows: 'The minds of the people in these districts are at present in a very restless and disaffected state and they have generally conceived the idea that there is an intention on the part of Government to commence and carry through a systematic interference with their religion, caste, and their social customs.' E. A. Samuells, Tayler's successor recorded in his letter to the Bengal Government, dated 25 September 1858: 'From all the information which has reached me, I believe the mutiny to have been the result of causes long in operation.'

Bihar was one of the important centres of the Indian movement of 1857-9, which was indeed, a national challenge to the growing supremacy of the East India Company. William Tayler, Commissioner of Patna, and some other British officers, were straining

themselves to the utmost to suppress the risings in Santhal Parganas, Patna and Tirhut during the months of June and July 1857.

Early in July, Mr Tayler stamped out with extreme ruthlessness a rising in Patna. The chief conspirators, including Peer Ali, the leader, were hanged after a nominal trial. It is significant to note that the organizers of this rising were working in league with their compatriots in Lucknow and other parts of the country.

Three of the regiments at Dinapore rose up against the Company on 25 July 1857. On 26 July they marched into the district of Shahabad to join in a well-organized movement against British political authority under the able leadership of the brave Rajput Chief, Kunwar Singh of Jagadishpur, whose chivalrous exploits form a highly inspiring tale. Undaunted by heavy odds and defying the weight of age, this octogenarian leader gathered round him hundreds of faithful and brave comrades, who were stirred to the depth of their hearts by patriotic feelings to free their country from the foreign yoke. In his stronghold at Jagadishpur, he had established a factory of arms and ammunition and had stored provisions to feed an army of 20,000 men for six months.

The chief followers of Kunwar Singh were his brothers Amar Singh and Reethnarayan Singh, his nephews Nishan Singh and Jaikrishna Singh, four zamindars of Shahabad named Narhan Singh, Joohan Singh, Thakur Dayal Singh, Bisheshwar Singh, a Mohamedan vakeel and another young Mohamedan. Joined by the troops, who had marched from Dinapore to Arrah on Monday 27 July, Kunwar Singh's party besieged the British at Arrah. The Magistrate there, Mr H. C. Wake, and all the European residents had already (evening of 26 July) taken shelter in a detached two-storey house fortified by Mr Boyle, District Engineer to the Railway Company. A body of European and Sikh soldiers, nearly 500 men sent from Dinapore under Captain Dunbar for the relief of the beleaguered British garrison at Arrah, had to own defeat on 30 July and those who survived retreated in utter frustration. On the same date, General Lloyd reported by telegraph to the Commander-in-Chief: 'The results of the expedition to Arrah have been, I regret to say, very disastrous owing entirely to the mismanagement of the officer in command, the late Captain Dunbar of Her Majesty's 37th Regiment.' Captain R. P. Harrison, commanding a detachment of Her Majesty's 37th Regiment, observed in his report to the Adjutant-General, dated 31 July 1857: 'The loss inflicted

on the rebels I believe to be small on account of the darkness, and the men being too exhausted to fire. The people of the country turned out against us.' Major General Lloyd again informed the Commander-in-Chief on 2 August 1857: 'Troops are inadequate to cope with Koer Singh and mutineers in Arrah . . . Koer Singh said to have mustered strongly on his own account; sometimes said to meditate an attack on Patna but real intentions not known. All the boats on the Sonae (the river Son) are in his possession.'

At this critical situation the British were saved by Major Eyre who on his way to Allahabad turned towards Arrah, defeated Kunwar Singh's forces at Bibiganj on 3 August and relieved the British garrison. With further reinforcements, he captured Jagadishpur and wantonly destroyed munitions, buildings and even temples. But this vandalism on the part of the British commander could not produce the slightest depression in the mind of Kunwar Singh. He extended the sphere of his activities far and wide.

Kunwar Singh's example greatly influenced the leaders in Chotanagpur, the Santhal Parganas and other parts of Bihar to carry on an intensive movement against the British. As a matter of fact, he was in correspondence with those who were conducting the movement in those areas, and there was a connecting link between the risings in Chotanagpur, Shahabad, Patna, Bhagalpur and Tirhut.

It is highly significant to note that Kunwar Singh's activities overflowed the borders of Bihar and he sought to act in co-operation with some of the prominent leaders and rebel troops in other parts of India, viz, Rewa, Gowalior, Lucknow, Azamgarh and so on. Leaving Bihar in August 1857, he moved from place to place fighting undauntedly against British troops to their great embarrassment at several places, in alliance with some local chiefs and also with the support of the common people. Referring to such allied efforts, a contemporary British military officer wrote in 1857: 'The crisis came. At first, apparently, a mere military Mutiny, it speedily changed its character, and became a national insurrection. The Rajpur villages in Bihar, those in the districts of Banaras, Azimgarh, Gorukhpore in the entire Doab, comprising Meerut and Agra in the Provinces of Rohilkhand and Oudh, shook off our rule and declared war against us.'

In September 1857, Kunwar Singh made an attempt to enter Rewa territory but was opposed by Lt. Osborne 'in political employ' of the local Raja. He then went to Banda. From Banda he and one

of his compatriots, Nishan Singh proceeded to Kalpi. Joined by the Gowalior troops, they took part in the battle of Kanpur. Though the more numerous troops of the British defeated Nana Saheb and his allies in this battle, Kunwar Singh instead of owning defeat marched towards Lucknow, where the Shah of Oudh presented him with a robe of honour, a firman for the district of Azamgarh and twelve thousand rupees in cash. On 17 March 1858, Kunwar Singh joined a band of his comrades at Atraulia (at a distance of 25 miles from Azamgarh). A batch of British troops under Colonel Milman attacked him in a few days but were themselves defeated. They retreated into the entrenchments at Azamgarh, pursued by their opponents who gained possession of that place on 26 March. The attempt of another batch of British troops under Colonel Dames to dislodge them from this position was frustrated, and Azamgarh remained under the control of Kunwar Singh.

This was a critical moment for the British. 'Knowing what sort of a man Kunwar Singh was, that he possessed audacity and courage, and that he knew the value of time in military operations, Lord Canning realized at once the danger of the situation.' The Governor-General ordered Lord Mark Kerr and Sir Edward Lugard to press Kunwar Singh and relieve Azamgarh. On hearing this, Kunwar Singh, a born commander and master-strategist, evacuated the place as a tactical move with only a portion of his troops, and proceeded towards Ghazipur leaving behind the rest of the army. His plan was then to cross the Ganges and reoccupy Jagadishpur. In the Ghazipur area, Kunwar Singh received assistance and supplies for his troops from some zamindars and the common rural people.

On 21 April 1858, Kunwar Singh fought bravely against the British troops under Brigadier Douglas. Unperturbed by physical injuries and the loss of an arm, this hero crossed the Ganges at Shivapur ghat the same night. We read in a contemporary record that 'the villagers on the right bank assisted the rebels . . . .' By the 23rd, Kunwar Singh was at Jagadishpur still with a strong determination to fight against the British. A British force sent towards Jagadishpur under Captain Le Grand against Kunwar Singh suffered a severe repulse on 23 April 1858, with heavy losses. Some of their guns were captured by the victors, and according to reports to the British made by their spies, out of a detachment of 250 or 300 men sent against Kunwar Singh 'only 25 or 35 Europeans, 30 or 35 Sikhs and 7 officers were seen returning to Arrah.'

But Kunwar Singh was not destined to live long. Worn out by fatigue and incessant fighting, he died three days after the victory over Le Grand's troops.

But nothing daunted by the death of their heroic leader, the followers of Kunwar Singh held out bravely in different parts of Bihar under the leadership of his brothers Amar Singh, Har Kissen Singh, Joodhun Singh and some others with the active co-operation of Ali Karim. Their activities continued to cause immense anxiety to the Company's Government for several months. Some of them even set up a parallel government at Jagadishpur. Amar Singh moved from place to place with unflagging energy to keep up the struggle. After the retreat of Nana Saheb into Nepal, he went to the tarai region to assume the leadership of Nana's troops. But he was ultimately captured about the middle of December 1859. He was kept temporarily in the Gorakhpur jail pending his trial in his own district. But he died there on 5 February 1860, from an attack of dysentery before his trial could take place.

In the Chotanagpur, Manbhum and Singhbhum and Palamau areas, also, British authority was seriously challenged at this time. At Hazaribagh, there were the detachments of the 7th and 8th Native Infantry sent from Patna on station duty in July 1857; at Ranchi was the headquarters and artillery of the local Ramgarh battalion, and at Chaibasa and Purulia there were detachments of the Ramgarh Battalion. The companies of infantry at Hazaribagh revolted towards the end of July 1857. The example of the Hazaribagh troops was followed in no time by the two companies of the Ramgarh Infantry with whom Lieutenant Graham had been ordered to proceed to Hazaribagh to disarm the battalions there on suspicion of disloyalty. They revolted under the leadership of Madhab Singh, the Jamadar, and hurried back to Ranchi to join others. Those at Doranda also followed suit under the guidance of Jaimangal Singh. Both Ranchi and Doranda soon fell into the hands of the sepoys who had risen in revolt. They took possession of what they found in the local treasury and released the prisoners from the jails. Though some of the zamindars of this area sought to impede the march of insurgents in various ways, several others allied themselves with them. Thakur Biswanath Sahi of Barkargarh and Pandey Ganpat Rai of Bhownro were leading supporters of the rebels. Detachments of the Ramgarh Battalion at Purulia and Chaibasa, too, revolted on 5 August. Their comrades at Doranda left

that place on 11 September and were joined at Chouriya by Bhola Singh, a zamindar, and from there they went through Kara and Chandwa to Chatra. They probably intended to proceed through Palamau and to effect a junction with Kunwar Singh's troops at Rohtasgarh. On 2 October 1857, the insurgents had a severe engagement at Chatra with British troops under Major English, and Sikhs under Lt. Erle and were defeated with heavy casualties on their side.

Jamadar Madhab Singh evaded capture throughout though the Company's Government put a reward of one thousand rupees on his head. But Jai Mangal Pande and Nadir Ali Khan, Subedars of the Ramgarh Battalion and two local leaders of the movement, were captured and brought before Major Simpson on 3 October. They were tried under the provisions of Act XVII of 1857 and sentenced to death. Biswanath Sahi and Ganpat Pandey also escaped for some time. They were captured at Kakraj in Lohardaga by Major Nation, Commandant of the 9th Bengal Police Battalion, in March 1858, and were hanged at Ranchi on one of the trees to the north of the Commissioner's compound, on the 16th and 21st of April respectively.

But the movement was still in progress in Singhbhum and Palamau. Raja Arjun Singh of Porhat and his brother led a formidable rising of the Kols of Singhbhum. About the middle of January 1858, they severely defeated the Company's troops, 150 of whom died on the field. Col. Foster, who had moved from Raniganj to Chaibasa, repulsed the insurgents at Chakradharpur and burnt many villages on his way to Porhat. But the Kols harassed the British throughout 1858. The Porhat Raja was arrested in 1859 through the help of Mewa Lal, Sheristedar of Chaibasa. His estates were confiscated and he was sent to Banaras as a state prisoner with a monthly pension of Rs 400.

In the Palamau district also the movement had taken a serious turn. The Bhogtas under the leadership of two of their chiefs, Pitambar and Lilambar, with others of the Kharwar tribe and a body of the Cheros organized themselves into a large force, rose in arms and attacked Chainpur on 21 October 1857. They marched to Shahpur, seized four guns of the Rani (Raja Churaman's wife) and overpowered the local police. Lt. Graham was besieged in the house of Raghubir Dayal, an ally of the British. In November a large number of the insurgents attacked the station of the coal company at Rajhara

and on 2 December they attacked the thanas at Manka and Chattarpur.

On 16 Jannary 1858, Captain Dalton himself started for Palamau with 140 of the Madras Sepoys, a small party of Ramgarh cavalry and a body of matchlockmen under Parganait Jagat Pal Singh. He reached Manka on 21 January and, being joined during the night by Lieutenant Graham, attacked next morning the Palamau fort which was held by the insurgents. The latter put up a bold opposition for some time but being dislodged from their position marched away in other directions. In the baggage left behind by them, the British officers discovered some letters written to Lilambar, Pitambar and Naklaut Nanji, and correspondence from Amar Singh promising immediate assistance from Kunwar Singh. This shows how the leaders in different parts of Bihar planned to stand and fight together.

Some more leaders of the movement were captured about this time. Tikait Unao Rao Singh, and his diwan Shaik Bikari, were executed. The Commissioner remained in the Bhogta country till 23 February 1858, but he was not successful in fully suppressing the movement. With all his efforts, he could not effect the capture of Lilambar and Pitambar. As measures of retaliation, 'their villages were destroyed, their goods and cattle seized and their estates confiscated to the State.' The Bhogtas were not completely subdued till the year 1859. Lilambar Sahi and Pitambar Sahi were eventually captured and hanged.

The Wahabi Movement in Bihar

The 'Wahabi Movement' though essentially a religious movement, had an important role to play in Bihar's struggle for freedom during the 19th century, because it had also a political objective as part of its religious ideal. According to the leaders of this movement, it was unislamic' to be ruled by the British. Wahabi means a disciple of Abdul Wahib of Najd (Arabia). The term was used by the British for political propaganda. For 40 years (1828-68) it had an important centre at Patna and was controlled by the members of a well-to-do Muslim family of the town who were noted for their learning and piety.

The political object of the movement was to free the country from foreign domination, as Syed Ahmad, the founder of the movement in India repeatedly explained in his numerous letters. He appointed

four Khalifas or spiritual vice-regents to manage and maintain the movement in Bihar. Prominent among those belonging to the Sadikpore family of Patna, were Moulvis Wilayat Ali, Inayat Ali, Shah Muhammad Husain and Abdullah, each of whom played a very important role in the movement. Both Wilayat Ali and Inayat Ali devoted their efforts to revitalize the organizational set-up in Bihar and Bengal. After labouring hard for some years in organizing the movement in Bihar and Bengal, Inayat Ali went over to Sittana, the headquarters of the Wahabi colony in the Tribal Area of N.W.F.P. and having taken over command of the Wahabi forces, engaged himself in anti-British activities. He was a brave and valiant soldier and a forceful preacher and organizer. But Wilayat Ali, his elder brother, possessed both political wisdom and more experience than Inayat Ali who was inclined to be too zealous and impetuous. After the death of Wilayat Ali, Inayat Ali once again became the leader of the movement. He wrote to his disciples in Bihar and Bengal to exert themselves in advancing their party's cause. From 1850-8, the Wahabis kept the frontier tribes in a state of active hostility against the British Government who had to send general expeditions against them. Throughout these years, the Patna centre acted as a base camp, supplying large sums of money and innumerable recruits to Sittana.

During the movement of 1857-9, Mr Tayler, the Commissioner of the Patna Division, adopted extremely repressive measures against the Wahabi leaders of Patna whom he suspected of conspiracy against the Government. He took recourse to dishonourable devices to arrest the three influential Wahabis of Patna, namely Moulvi Mohammad Husain, Moulvi Ahmadullah, and M. Waizul Haque.

After the death of Inayat Ali (1869) M. Maqsud Ali of Surajgarh (Monghyr) took charge of the Wahabi colony at Sittana. It had had a chequered history having been destroyed by the British during the previous campaign of 1858. But it revived due to the untiring efforts and zeal of the Wahabis. On the death of M. Maqsud Ali, M. Abdullah, the son of Wilayat Ali, assumed leadership (1861). Recruits from Bihar and Bengal began to flock to Sittana which was reoccupied in 1863. The British Government adopted several measures to send a big force to crush the movement at its root once for all. But baulked in the military field, they succeeded in their efforts by sowing seeds of disunity among the tribes through the intrigues of their political agents.

Exasperated by defeats and the consequent loss of prestige, the

British Governor set up a special machinery to deal ruthlessly with the Wahabi movement in the different provinces of India. The famous Patna trials of M. Ahmadullah and others (1864) was a direct result of this policy.

Moulvi Ahmadullah ever since his arrest in 1857 and subsequent release had managed to preserve good relations with the British authorities. Later he assumed full charge of the Patna Centre and devoted himself solely to the reorganization of the movement which had suffered a set-back since the arrest of his elder brother M. Yehya Ali. His activities were however being closely watched by the secret police, and he was arrested on 5 November 1864, on a charge of conspiracy to wage war against the Queen. The Judge at Patna sentenced him to the extreme penalty of the law with forfeiture of all his properties. The sentence of death was however commuted by the High Court to one of transportation for life. He was sent to Port Blair (Andamans) on 13 April 1863, where he was later joined by his brother Yehya Ali. Both of them died there after about twenty years. The steps taken against conspirators were marked by ruthlessness which did not spare even the family graveyard. The graves of their ancestors were destroyed. The character and achievements of the Wahabi leaders of Patna have been very aptly summed up by Hunter in his 'Indian Mussalmans': 'Indefatigable as missionaries, careless of themselves, blameless in their lives, supremely devoted to the overthrow of the English infidels, adroitly skilful in organizing a permanent system of supplying money and recruits, the Patna Califs stand forth as types and exemplars of the sect. Much of their teaching was faultless and it has been given to them to stir up thousands of their countrymen to purer life and truer conception of the Almighty.'

The arrest and deportation of M. Ahmadullah did not mean the end of the movement. Disciples secretly carried on the work, levies of money and recruits went on as before, and the British Government had to devote much of its resources and energy in counteracting the efforts of its protagonists during the succeeding decade.

The Birsa Movement in Chotanagpur

The pre-1857 movements of the Kols and the Santhals had been suppressed by the Company's Government. But discontent and unrest lingered among different sections of the Adibasis and Santhals, and there were occasional outbursts during the second half of the

nineteenth century. Some agrarian disturbances from 1881 to 1895 in Ranchi and Singhbhum were also suppressed by the British Government. But the ferment of discontent did not subside. Immediately it assumed the form of a more formidable movement under the leadership of Birsa, a Munda of the village of Chalkad in Tamar Thana. On account of his religious zeal and popularity he came to be known later as Birsa Bhagwan. The underlying object of the Birsa movement was the internal purification by eradication of social evils and along with it was associated the desire to remove the alien government and its supporters. The landlords and other vested interests were considered to be responsible for various socio-economic changes adversely affecting the conditions of people in those areas. The first Birsa movement of 1895 was suppressed by the British Government after Birsa and some of his followers were cleverly arrested at dead of night in August 1895. They were each sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for a term of two years. Birsa was also fined Rs 50 in default of which payment, he was to undergo an additional term of rigorous imprisonment for six months.

After the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, Birsa was released from Hazaribagh Jail early in January 1898. While inflicting punishment on Birsa and his followers in 1895, the Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi described it to be 'a matter of unusual congratulation that the movement was successfully extinguished.' But his optimism was belied. Imprisonment could not kill the revolutionary zeal of Birsa, and soon after his release he renewed his activities with greater vigour. Moving from village to village, he and his followers revitalized the forces of opposition. By rendering help and service to the people of those areas sorely afflicted by the ravages of famine, scarcity and epidemic, they were able to evoke widespread sympathy and support. Birsa, whom the Government looked upon as 'a dangerous agitator', was a friend of the masses, possessed of a strong determination to eradicate injustice. For a crusade of this kind, he realized the need for organizing a fighting force through effective training in the use of bow and arrow and sword of as many as could be recruited. Gaya Munda, one of his close associates and principal advisers, was placed in charge of this training as Minister and Commander-in-Chief. Prominent among others who were given important assignments by Birsa in leading the Adivasis to fight for freedom were Demka Munda (Bari Mauja), Panau Munda (Kating Kel), Sundar Munda (Mani Bera), Tripru Munda (Rui Tola),

Johan Munda (Burju) Dukhan Sawansi (Gowa), Hatiram Munda (Gutu Hatu) and Risa Munda. Khunti, near Ranchi, became the headquarters of this revolutionary force, while training centres were started at Ranchi, Chakradharpur, Bandu, Tamar, Karra, Torpa, Basia, Sisai, and some other places. For propaganda and planning of operations, Birsa and his preacher followers held numerous meetings at night in comparatively secluded places from February 1898, to 24 December 1899.

The Commissioner of Chotanagpur made frantic efforts to get Birsa and his followers arrested. Proceeding to Singhbhum he made 'arrangements for the Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum to prosecute the search for Birsa Bhagwan in the hilly country to the north of that district,' before he came back to his headquarters on 27 January 1910. Local treachery now helped government efforts. Pro-British watchmen of some neighbouring villages discovered Birsa with his wife and another woman in the jungle, west of Sankra and 1½ miles from that village. They crept stealthily into the place, and 'waiting until the three had retired to rest under a tree and were fast asleep . . . made their rush and overpowered Birsa (3 February 1900) before he was able to make use of his weapons. The captors at once brought their prisoner and his wife and the other woman to the Deputy Commissioner, who was at Bandgaon, and were paid the reward of Rs 500 offered by the Government.' Birsa was sent to Ranchi under a guard of military police and was there confined to jail. His wife was not allowed to accompany him to Ranchi. Death relieved him of the agonies behind prison walls within a few months. He had an attack of cholera on 30 May 1900, which proved to be fatal and he expired on 2 June. Thus ended the life of a great leader who had boldly championed the cause of his suffering fellow-men against the grinding process of an oppressive agrarian system and other abuses largely due to the changes wrought by an alien rule for its own interests. His mundane existence was no more, no doubt, but his sacred memory is enshrined in the hearts of many and his heroism and sacrifice form the theme of many inspiring folk-songs and ballads.

A large number of the followers of Birsa were rounded up. Mr J. J. Platel was appointed as special officer for their trial in the Ranchi district. In the Singhbhum district the Deputy Commisioner, Mr Thomson, was to try such cases. Eighty-seven Birsaites were committed to session; capital sentence was inflicted on two and the

rest were sentenced to various terms of transportation or imprisonment. On appeal to the High Court, some were released and the sentences of a few were reduced. Some of the mankis (divisional headmen) were deprived of their mankiship on charges of joining what the Government considered to be a 'conspiracy headed by Birsa', and others 'of proved loyalty' were appointed in their places.

EARLY CONGRESS DAYS

In the earliest days (1885-1908) of the Congress, there 'used to be a great deal of enthusiasm in Bihar about it, and a large number of delegates used to attend the sittings of that body.' After a few years, interest in the Congress dwindled in Bihar. But soon some enlightened and liberal leaders of the province made earnest efforts to activize the Congress. At a meeting held in 1908 under the presidentship of Nawab Sarfraz Husain Khan Bahadur, a Bihar Provincial Congress Committee was formed with its headquarters at Patna and branches in the districts.

The Provincial Congress Committee used to hold a Political Conference. The first session of the Bihar Provincial Conference met at Patna early in 1908, with Sir Ali Imam as its President. Mazhar-ul-Haque Saheb, an adored figure of modern Bihar played a leading part in it. While an alien government was trying, for its own interests, particularly from 1906, to intensify the communal cleavage in India, Bihar 'presented a unique spectacle, in the whole of India, of Muslims and non-Muslims working shoulder to shoulder in complete harmony, inspired by common ideals and aspirations.'

The year 1912 is memorable in the history of Bihar for two reasons. It saw the creation of a separate province of Bihar in response to the legitimate demands of the local people, and it was also the year when the Indian National Congress in its twenty-seventh session met for the first time in this historic land, hallowed by the sacred traditions of a glorious past, with the Hon'ble R. N. Mudholkar as its President. The Chairman of the Reception Committee was Mazhar-ul-Haque Saheb and Sachchidanand Sinha was the General Secretary.

In fact, since then new Bihar began to play an active role in the successive phases of Indian nationalism. In 1914 two eminent Biharis, Mazhar-ul-Haque Saheb and Sachchidanand Sinha, were elected to serve on a deputation sent to England by the Congress along with Bhupendra Nath Basu, M. A. Jinnah, N. M. Samarth, B. N. Sharma, and Lala Lajpat Rai.

HOME RULE MOVEMENT

Then came the Home Rule movement which made itself felt in Bihar. At a meeting held at Bankipur on 16 December 1916, it was decided to start a Home Rule League there and the following were elected as office-bearers:

President: Mazhar-ul-Haque; Vice-Presidents: Sarfraz Husain Khan and Purnendu Narain Sinha; Secretaries: Chandrabansi Sahay and Baijnath Narain Singh.

Mazhar-ul-Haque then delivered an inspiring speech stressing the need for the formation of the League.

At another meeting held at Patna on 17 February 1918, it was decided to organize village campaigns and to collect subscriptions during February 1918. Annie Besant came to Patna on 18 April 1918, and she was escorted from the station in a triumphal procession with 'arati' (waving of lights) on the way to the residence of Purnendu Narain Sinha.

At a meeting held at the Ali Manzil, the local Home Rule leaders, Hasan Imam, Purnendu Narain Sinha, and Sarfraz Husain Khan signed the latest manifesto. All this caused much anxiety to the Commissioner of Patna. Mrs Besant again paid a flying visit to Patna on 25 July 1918, to ascertain the views of the local Home Rulers regarding political reforms and she met among others, Hasan Imam and Sachchidanand Sinha.

REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM AND BIHAR

While the Congress was following constitutional means for the attainment of self-government, a section of nationalists in India, from the closing years of the 19th century, preached radical ideas and followed revolutionary methods. The Japanese victory over Russia in 1905 generated fresh hopes of liberation in different parts of Asia. Lord Minto referred to it in a speech in January 1910. C. F. Andrews describes this widespread aspiration for freedom in Asiatic minds in his work, 'The Renaissance in India'. The partition of Bengal (1905) and Lord Curzon's system of 'thorough' gave a stimulus to the Indian National movement. In the words of Surendranath Banerjee the partition 'humiliated' us but also acted 'as a blessing in disguise'. It intensified the boycott and swadeshi movements which assumed a 'religious hue'. The 'Bande Mataram' song became in itself a 'religious mantra', a magic word of power.

At such a time, an extreme section of the nationalists in Bengal

organized a party under the leadership of Barindra Kumar Ghosh (Sri Aurobindo's younger brother) and Bhupendra Nath Datta to effect a revolution through underground and secret activities. The Bengali journals 'Yugantar' and 'Sandhya' were their party organs. All this influenced Bihar and on 30 April 1908, in Muzaffarpur a bomb was thrown which unfortunately killed two European ladies, the wife and daughter of Mr Pingle Kennedy, a leading pleader of the Muzaffarpur Bar. The bomb was in fact meant for Mr Kingsford, then District Judge of Muzaffarpur, who, as Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta, had made himself extremely unpopular by passing heavy sentences on political workers. For the offence, Khudiram, a Bengali youth of seventeen, was arrested and hanged on 11 August 1908, while his associate Prafulla Chaki shot himself dead. Deoghar was another centre of revolutionary activities and the 'Sil's lodge was used for the preparation of bombs and training of associates.' Sakharam Ganesh Deoskar of Karun in the Deoghar subdivision of the district of Santhal Parganas, himself a zealous nationalist worker, was a cultural guide of the workers of this category. Indunath Nandy and a few others preached this revolutionary cult in the different villages of Bihar with the help of magic lanterns Ranchi was another such centre and Anusheelan Samitis were started at Patna and some other places. Some from Dumka were implicated in the Rodda Arms case.

At this time, Swami Satya Deva was touring Bihar. The Government considered his speeches as 'bordering closely on sedition'. Officers were asked to 'keep a watch on his movements'. There were some workers in Bihar having faith in revolution through secret and violent means during the succeeding phases of the national movement. But Bihar was destined to play an important role more through non-violent means and by working out the constructive programme of Gandhiji.

Gandhi's Champaran Mission

Champaran is an area of historic significance. In our own days, Champaran has a unique importance in the history of Indian freedom. It was here that Mahatma Gandhi after his return from Africa, made for the first time on Indian soil a bold and successful experiment of the new weapon of Satyagraha he had forged abroad. It was a unique method in social dynamics, based on what he loved to call soul-force, developed through service and sacrifice, with

truth and non-violence as the sheet anchors. It was aimed at 'curing all human ills', the awakening and salvation of downtrodden masses, the eradication of economic inequities, and the purification of society. Dr Rajendra Prasad rightly observed in 1949: '... what happened in Champaran has been repeated, as I had hoped, on a vast scale in the country as a whole. Champaran became free from planters' tyranny, India today is free from foreign rule.' Gandhiji's advent imbued the people of this area with a consciousness and moral faith in the righteousness of their cause, which are supremely important factors for the progress and successful consummation of a creative and constructive revolution.

European indigo planters in north Bihar carried on indigo cultivation under two systems, (*a*) Zerait and (*b*) Assamiwar. Under the Zerait system, indigo cultivation was under their direct management. They engaged tenant-labourers who were always ill-paid and were discontented. According to the Assamiwar system, the factory chiefs had the indigo lands cultivated by tenants. The most prevalent method under this system was known as Tinkathia. The other methods were Khushki and Kurtauli. The Kurtauli method, though not extensively prevalent in Champaran, was highly prejudicial to the interests of the ryots. The Commissioner of Patna observed in 1885: 'The Kurtauli lease is a new institution dating from a very few years back... There is growing up in our midst and in spite of our efforts at beneficent legislation, a system under which the ryot mortgages his entire holding including even the very site of his house for a period probably extending beyond his own lifetime, redemption being contingent on the repayment of a loan; the ryot, to use the common expression, is selling himself body and soul into hopeless servitude.' In the Khushki method, rather uncommon in Champaran, agreements were executed by ryots who were not tenants of the factory.

Under the Tinkathia method, a tenant had to cultivate indigo on three kathas per bigha of his holding or the factory lands during a long period (20 years, 25 years or even 30 years) and was formally entitled to get a price for it, according to the Sattas or written agreements. It was calculated to promote the maximum interests of the planters at the cost of tenants.

Coercion on them for converting their lands into indigo-producing fields, extortion of forced labour from them under all kinds of threats, extremely meagre payment and sometimes even no payment,

inflictions of heavy fines for failure to grow indigo for any reason whatsoever, were some of the notorious features of this oppressive and grinding system. Their occasional protests and cries for protection against the harsh treatment of the planters were wasted on the air. At last their deliverance was wonderfully effected through the efforts of Mahatma Gandhi and some of his Bihari co-workers.

How Raj Kumar Shukla, a leader of the Champaran ryots managed to bring Gandhiji into Champaran is a very interesting story. He met Gandhiji and placed their grievances before him at the time of the Lucknow session of the Congress in December 1916. At this Congress, Braj Kishore Prasad, the veteran patriot of Bihar, moved a resolution to urge upon the Government the 'desirability of appointing a mixed Committee of officials and non-officials to enquire into the agrarian trouble and the strained relations between indigo ryots and European planters and to suggest remedies therefor.' The resolution was passed.

After the Congress, the Bihar delegates, Raj Kumar Shukla in particular, urged Gandhiji to visit Champaran to witness the miseries of the ryots. Gandhiji promised to tour Champaran about the following March or April. Raj Kumar Shukla met Mahatma Gandhi at Calcutta. He started from Calcutta with Shukla on 9 April 1917, and reached Patna on the morning of the next day. The same night both proceeded to Muzaffarpur.

The Government however, did not like Gandhiji to probe into the hardships of the downtrodden peasants. The Magistrate ordered him not to enter the villages! But Gandhiji insisted on his right to see things for himself despite orders under section 144. He made the following significant observations in a statement before the Magistrate of Champaran on 18 April 1917: 'I venture to make this statement not in any way in extenuation of the penalty to be awarded against me, but to show that I have disregarded the order served upon me not for want of respect for lawful authority but in obedience to the highest law of our being, the voice of conscience.' Mahatmaji engaged himself heart and soul in recording statements of the aggrieved ryots who came in large numbers. Typewritten copies in thousands of such pathetic statements are still available in the library of the Bihar Vidyapeeth, Patna. On 21 April, the Magistrate, Mr Heycock, sent a written message to Gandhiji that the Lieutenant-Governor had ordered the case against him to be withdrawn. This was a moral triumph and Mahatmaji continued his great work.

At the invitation of the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Edward Gait, he met him at Ranchi in June 1917. The outcome was the appointment of a Committee of Enquiry to investigate and report on the agrarian conditions in Champaran. Mahatma Gandhi became a member of the Committee on condition that he should be free to consult his co-workers during the progress of the enquiry, that by being a member of the Committee he 'did not cease to be the ryots' advocate' and that in case the result of the enquiry was not satisfactory he 'should be free to guide and advise the ryots as to what line of action they should take.' On the recommendations of this Committee was passed the Champaran Agrarian Bill, which served to alleviate the long-standing and acute miseries of a vast body of men and was a 'moral victory of the ryots.' Mahatma Gandhi's method in Champaran proved a complete success. It is a landmark in the history of Satyagraha, as also in the history of Bihar, as well as of India.

Mahatma Gandhi's mission there was also marked by the inauguration of welfare work for the uncared for rural folk who had been suffering from grievous social maladies. Two of these were colossal: pathetic ignorance and careless living under unhygienic and insanitary conditions. With his instinctive love for mankind, and with a growing experience of Bihar, Mahatma Gandhi was convinced, as he himself noted, that 'work of a permanent nature was impossible without proper village education.' For this he wanted teachers of the right type. 'My idea was,' writes Mahatma Gandhi in his Autobiography, 'never to entrust children to commonplace teachers. Their literary qualification was not so essential as their moral fibre.'

In response to Mahatma Gandhi's 'public appeal' for voluntary teachers, a batch of social workers with previous experience came to Bihar from Bombay, Karnatak and Maharashtra. Schools were started at different places, such as Barharwa, at a distance of twenty miles to the east of Motihari, Bhitharwa in the Nepal Tarai, at Madhubani and so on. Along with volunteers from outside, Babu Dharanidhar of Bihar served in the school at Madhubani by staying there for six months with his wife and children. About 100 boys received education at the Madhubani school. A girls' school was also started where about forty girls studied. Weaving was introduced at the Barharwa school.

Medical relief was started at once under the guidance of Dr De of the Servants of India Society, and devoted volunteers inspired the village folk to give up their old apathy and dirty habits. Volunteers

also inspired them with examples of self-help and corporate activities.

Some of the most patriotic leaders of Bihar zealously worked at Champaran under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi. Dr Rajendra Prasad, now President of our Republic, Anugraha Narain Sinha, the late Finance Minister of Bihar, Shrikrishna Sinha, now Chief Minister of Bihar and a number of others, who have now passed away, were enlisted in the peaceful army of Gandhiji at that time. Mahatma Gandhi's great appreciation of their work was expressed by him in the following brief statement in a letter written by him to Janakdhari Prasad in 1925: 'I treasure the memory of the faithful co-workers of Champaran. I shall never have and never had a more faithful band to work with. If I had such a band throughout India, Swaraj would not be long in coming to India.'

GANDHIJI'S CAMPAIGNS AND BIHAR

As between Gandhiji and Bihar, it was a matter of 'he came, he saw, he conquered.' After the successful campaign of Champaran, Gandhiji became the idol of the people. All those who co-operated with him became his devoted disciples and remained so to the end. Bihar came to be known throughout India, as a 'Gandhi-province' during all the subsequent all-India campaigns.

There were in all six major all-India non-violent campaigns during the political struggle for independence which Gandhiji led and directed with ultimate success. These movements took place between 1919 and 1944. Though based on the principle of Satyagraha, they assumed different forms to suit the situation and were in response to prevailing circumstances. Each one of them was based on an all-India pattern so far as principles and the main items were concerned. Occasional violence or any other extraneous items that sometimes were found in these movements were neither a part of the movement nor were sanctioned by Gandhiji. Sometimes ignorance, at other times mass resentment, at times mistaken ideas were responsible for such things. By and large, Bihar as well as India kept to the broad lines laid down by the author of the new way of fighting injustice, political, social and economic.

Bihar played a significant part in all these campaigns. Short of any no-tax movements on a big scale, Bihar went to the extreme of non-violent resistance, of fearlessness and bravery, of suffering and sacrifice. The faith of the people of Bihar remained unshaken under the hardest and most trying circumstances.

It is impossible to recount here the great deeds done and to mention the heroes who were responsible for them. Another big volume, we understand, is under preparation to give a detailed account of Bihar's part in the Indian struggle for independence. What is being attempted here is to record the campaigns, the occasion for them, their nature and general pattern and any significant incident or incidents in Bihar in connexion with them.

THE ROWLATT ACT—SATYAGRAHA, 1919

Nationalist India asked for bread and was given a stone instead. Instead of giving India satisfactory political reforms after the successful termination of World War I, instead of assuaging the feelings of Indian Muslims on the question of Khilafat, the Government came out with the lame Montford reforms and the Rowlatt Bill. The bill purported to give new and arbitrary powers to the bureaucracy for suppressing so-called sedition. Gandhiji started his Satyagraha movement on 30 March 1919, according to which, selected persons broke certain repugnant laws after giving notice to Government. He called for a country-wide hartal and fast to begin with and observance of a national week as a protest. Hartals, processions and other demonstrations were staged in Patna, Muzaffarpur, Chapra, Champaran, Monghyr, Bhagalpur, Gaya, Jharia and Katras. Gandhiji's arrest at Palwal on his way to the Punjab, and the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre of unarmed hundreds at Amritsar on 13 April 1919, thoroughly stirred the heart of Bihar.

NON-VIOLENT NON-COOPERATION, 1920-4

The Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs were the immediate main targets of attack in this movement. The demand for Swaraj was there of course. It is significant to note that on 28 August, before the special session of the Congress early in September 1920, the Bihar Provincial Conference passed a resolution supporting Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent non-cooperation, which he had declared on 1 August. Dr Rajendra Prasad presided. Gandhiji visited Patna in December and laid the foundation-stone of a national college and Bihar Vidyapeeth. Both these have played an important part in training young national workers. The joining of Maulana Abdul Bari as a national worker was a distinct gain to the movement.

The mass movement in Bihar as elsewhere took the shape of the five famous boycotts: boycott of elections and legislature, of law

courts, of schools, of drink and drugs, and of foreign cloth. On the positive side, there was the movement for the production of khadi, the establishment of panchayats, the collection of Swaraj funds, the removal of untouchability and the strengthening of the Congress organization. Under every one of these heads, the people of Bihar contributed their utmost.

Some of the important features of this movement in Bihar may be mentioned here. There was a boycott of auctions for settlement of ferries and pounds in Monghyr and Bhagalpur. There was a strike in the Government press in Patna and in the Railway collieries at Giridih. There was a police strike in March—April (1921) which spread to Patna, Purnea, Monghyr and Champaran. In August, Gandhiji paid a visit to Bihar when the Congress Working Committee met in Patna. There was hartal in the whole of Bihar when the Prince of Wales landed in Bombay on 17 November. When the Prince visited Patna on 22 December there was a complete boycott: 'the main thoroughfares were almost empty; no vehicles plied for hire and no crowds lined the streets along which the procession passed.' The arrest of Gandhiji in March 1922 was marked by province-wide protest meetings. The Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee of the Congress visited Bihar in 1922.

The most significant event however, was the 37th session of the Congress at Gaya which voted for the continuance of the boycott of legislatures as well as the reiteration of the Ahmedabad Congress resolution on enrolment of volunteers. Bihar along with Orissa, Andhra, Karnatak, Tamilnad, and Gujerat continued to be the strongholds of the 'no-change' policy. In this session Rajendra Prasad was elected Secretary of the Congress and the office of the AICC was shifted to Patna.

The movement had its effect on the Adivasis as well. The Tana Bhagats, a reformist group among them, attended the Gaya Congress. They took to no-tax and stuck to it at great sacrifice.

Rajendra Prasad himself participated in the famous flag Satyagraha at Nagpur in 1923 along with a batch of volunteers from Bihar.

As a result of a schism in the Congress, the Swaraj Party (the pro-council-entry group) was formed in January 1923 under the presidentship of Deshbandhu Das. It had not much following in Bihar. The elections to local bodies, however, were fought by Congressmen and they won a good many seats.

Gandhiji, after coming out of jail in 1924, allowed the Swaraj

Party to go its own way and recommended the constructive programme instead for his other followers. He presided over the Belgaum Congress in December 1924. The non-cooperation movement was suspended and Bihar concentrated on khadi production and other constructive activities for the next five years until the launching of the Civil Disobedience Movement in April 1930.

Civil Disobedience for Complete Independence: 1930-4

With the inauguration of the Civil Disobedience Movement for Swaraj under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the year 1930 proved to be one of the most eventful years in which Bihar's role was very prominent. Here below are a few high-lights.

The 6 of April 1930, was fixed as the date for embarking on Salt Satyagraha. In the month of February, Rajendra Prasad reviewed the possible lines of civil disobedience in a speech at Patna. Jawaharlal Nehru's tour of the Saran, Champaran and Muzaffarpur districts from 31 March to 3 April was a source of great inspiration to the people. By the first week of April, over 50,000 Congress volunteers were enrolled here and their numbers went on swelling. 'The Searchlight' of 9 April reported: 'The thrill of a new hope, the surge of a new aspiration, the pursuit of a noble ideal and romance of a new sacrifice have surcharged the atmosphere.'

From 16 to 21 April, 1930, the city of Patna witnessed one of the most heroic scenes in the face of naked violence on the part of the police. Regardless of all personal considerations, people jumped into action with perfect non-violence and maintained wonderful patience and restraint even under grave provocation. Patna inaugurated a Satyagraha on 16 April 1930, and volunteers in procession proceeded to Nakhas Pind, a place about two miles to the east of Mangles Tank in Patna city, which had been selected as the spot for the violation of salt laws by manufacturing salt. The volunteers were held up by the police and the former did not move from the spot. After returning from his tour in other parts of Bihar, Rajendra Prasad saw the volunteers, at midnight on 17 April, asleep on the road and police standing at a short distance from them. The police perpetrated merciless atrocities on volunteers in the vanguard, most of whom were seriously wounded; they made a 'savage attack' on Prof. Abdul Bari when he was trying to control the crowd in front of the Patna College and dealt him three blows.

Prof. Bari mentioned in a statement on 21 April: 'I was regulating the crowd in front of the Patna College. Suddenly I saw two Europeans followed by a certain number of sowars who rode up to me in an excited mood. One of the two gave me three blows with a baton with his full might as it appeared to me. The first time he said it was for him, the second blow for the Superintendent of Police, and the third was a heavier one and was on the head which resulted in a swelling. The second European officer then came up and gave me two lashes with a hunter. I remained standing there for some time and saw that they were chasing the crowd with their horses, and whipping them right and left.' Acharya Kripalani, while standing near the T. K. Ghose's Academy, was also assaulted by the police with batons. The European police officers even pressed against Rajendra Prasad while he was moving quietly along the road with a few other leaders. But repression failed to terrorize the patriots. This was the pattern of police action in many places.

A regular camp of volunteers was started at Bihpur in the district of Bhagalpur. Barracks were erected where volunteers drilled and practised lathi play, the routine being regulated by bugle call. Subsequently Government decided to declare the camp to be an unlawful assembly and to break it up. The camp and the local Congress office were seized by the police. While the camp was being dismantled by them, a large crowd collected when Rajendra Prasad, Abdul Bari and other leaders were present. Considerable agitation prevailed in Bihpur and about 130 out of 250 choukidars in this police station resigned. The action taken by Government was condemned even by the liberals of Bhagalpur, and five newly elected members of the Legislative Council resigned in protest.

In Monghyr district, Congress activities were increasing rapidly under the able leadership of Shrikrishna Sinha, the then Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee and Nand Kumar Sinha. Both were subsequently arrested. The breaking of the salt law became chronic and hundreds were arrested.

The movement for the non-payment of Choukidari tax spread with considerable intensity from area to area and Government thought of crushing it by adopting stringent measures. Confiscation of property and goods of all kinds including ploughs, cattle, grain, cooking utensils and so on, for non-payment of Choukidari tax, and belabouring persons, were common features of official repression.

There was a brief lull between 5 March 1931 and 1 January

1932 on account of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and Gandhiji's attending the Round Table Conference in London. He came back disappointed. When he was refused even an interview with Lord Willingdon, the Congress had to take up the thread of the Civil Disobedience Movement where it had left it.

To smash the fresh movement, the Government arrested Gandhiji and passed a large number of Ordinances covering 'almost every activity of Indian life'. A new feature of the Ordinances this time was that parents and guardians were to be punished for the offences of their wards!

The police even resorted to firing at several places such as Motihari, Rosera in the Darbhanga district, Sheohar in the Muzaffarpur district, Begusarai, and Tarapur in the Monghyr district. Even under these extremely trying circumstances and in the face of the utmost police vigilance, arrests and lathi charges, the Congress held its annual session at Delhi on 24 April 1932 and put on record its high appreciation of the supreme sacrifice of those who were privileged to lay down their lives in the service of their motherland as victims of indiscriminate firing and lathi charges by the police and military, notably in the Frontier Province and Tarapur in Bihar.

Indeed, even the most ferocious repression cannot kill the innate spiritual urge for national self-determination. So, notwithstanding the arrest of Rajendra Prasad and many other leaders, the promulgation of stringent Ordinances by Government, and the unrestricted use of all weapons of persecution at their disposal, the movement continued in all its forms, such as picketing of foreign cloth and the sale of liquor, non-payment of taxes, and so on, till it was suspended by Gandhiji in 1934 under certain circumstances. The National leaders then decided to concentrate on constructive activities.

FIRST CONGRESS MINISTRY

The Government of India Act, 1935, fell far short of national expectations, but the Congress decided to contest the elections. The elections to the Legislative Assembly in Bihar took place between 22 and 27 January 1937, and the result was a sweeping success for the Congress. Of the total 152 seats in the Assembly, the Congress contested 107 and captured 98. The Congress got all the five seats in the general urban constituencies and 68 of the 73 seats in the rural constituencies. They also secured 14 out of 15 seats in the scheduled caste constituencies, 5 out of the 7 Muslim seats contested by them,

and 2 out of 3 labour seats and most of the Adivasi seats. Eight Congress nominees were returned to the Council as a result of indirect election by the Assembly.

After certain declarations on the part of the British Government, the Congress Working Committee decided at its meeting held at Wardha on 8 July 1937, that 'Congressmen be permitted to accept office where they may be invited thereto.' But it was made clear that office was to be 'accepted and utilized for the purpose of working in accordance with the lines laid down in the Congress election manifesto and to further in every possible way the Congress policy of combating the new Act on the one hand and of prosecuting the constructive programme on the other.'

In Bihar, a Congress Ministry was formed on 20 July 1937, with Shrikrishna Sinha as Premier. The other Ministers were Anugraha Narain Sinha, Syed Mahmud and Jaglal Chaudhury. Ram Dayalu Singh and Prof. Abdul Bari became Speaker and Deputy Speaker respectively. Baladeva Sahay was appointed Advocate-General. The Ministry in Bihar strongly protested against a circular issued by the Chief Secretary, Mr Brett, and he had to withdraw it. But the Ministry tendered its resignation on the Governor's refusal to agree with its viewpoint regarding the release of political prisoners. An agreement was reached on this matter in the month of February 1938, and the Ministry resumed office.

On the outbreak of World War II in 1939, Indian nationalists insisted on a clear declaration of war aims by the British Government and the formation of a national government. The Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, issued a statement on 17 October 1939, which was considered by the Indian National Congress to be 'wholly unsatisfactory and calculated to rouse resentment among all those who were anxious to gain and were intent upon gaining India's independence.' The Government's war policy produced considerable resentment in Bihar as in other parts of India and leaders of all sections of nationalists (Congress, Congress Socialists, Forward Bloc) raised voices of protest against recruitment and support for what was considered to be an 'Imperialist War'. On 16 October, the Premier, Shrikrishna Sinha, moved a resolution in the Assembly inviting the Government to make a clear declaration 'that they have decided to regard India as an independent nation entitled to frame her own constitution, and further to take suitable action, in so far as it is possible in the immediate present, to give effect to that declaration

in regard to the governance of India.' This resolution which was similar to those passed by other Congress Legislatures was passed by 73 votes to 6.

On this issue the Bihar Ministry tendered its resignation on 31 October 1939, and on 3 November, the Governor issued a proclamation under section 93 of the Government of India Act, whereby he assumed to himself all legislative and administrative powers, and a constitutional deadlock ensued.

Independence Day (26 January) was celebrated in Bihar with due solemnity, students taking a prominent part. The arrest of Jaiprakash Narain under the Defence of India Rules for a speech delivered at Jamshedpur on 18 February 1940, added to the national discontent in Bihar. The Defence of India Rules began to be used extensively and rigorously by Government.

THE RAMGARH CONGRESS

The year 1940 is of special significance for Bihar as the 53rd session of the Indian National Congress was held at Ramgarh on 19 and 20 March under the presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. In his welcome speech, Rajendra Prasad recalled the glorious traditions of Bihar and observed: 'Today we are face to face with a big crisis and we are called upon to get ready to meet it. May this old and rich heritage inspire us and may we Biharis, who are said to be backward, gather courage and strength from it, not only to offer a welcome but also to take their share in giving effect to the resolutions which you may arrive at.'

Jawaharlal Nehru moved the only resolution of this Congress, that on Satyagraha. It was duly passed. Gandhiji in his speech emphasized the importance of ahimsa and constructive work in earnest preparation for non-violent Satyagraha. 'Truth and Ahimsa', he observed, 'are the essence of Satyagraha, and charka (spinning wheel) is the symbol.'

Some Indian nationalists of extreme radical views, mostly of the Forward Bloc, considered the Congress viewpoint to be leaning towards compromise and urged absolute non-cooperation with imperialist forces. To start a movement in furtherance of their own policy, they held under the presidentship of Subhas Chandra Bose an All-India Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh during the Congress session. Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, Shilbhadra Yajee and some others from Bihar played a prominent role in it.

In his presidential address at the Ramgarh Congress, Maulana Azad emphasized the heritage of common nationality in respect of both Hindus and Muslims in India. But unfortunately communal differences were on the increase. At its Lahore session, the Muslim League enunciated the theory that Muslims 'are not a minority' but a 'nation' and they must have their homeland and their state (Pakistan). Some Muslims from Bihar attended the Lahore session of the Muslim League. In a conference of the Bihar branch of the Muslim League, held at Chapra on 13 and 14 April 1940, the Lahore resolution was supported and on 19 April, Pakistan Day was observed at different places in Bihar. Meetings were held in which the Lahore resolution was read and passed. But the Ahrar Party and the Momins condemned these activities.

INDIVIDUAL CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The Viceroy's statement of 8 August 1940, (known as the August offer) made no improvement in the deadlock and it was condemned by Congress. Congress members of the Bihar Legislature held a meeting on 13 August to protest against the Viceroy's declaration. As a moral protest against the policy of the British Government in relation to India, the Congress, under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, decided to launch Individual Civil Disobedience only by chosen individuals so that no embarrassment would be caused to the Government during wartime by mass civil disobedience. Bihar's response to the Individual Civil Disobedience movement was quick and enthusiastic. The Congress, however, suspended Individual Civil Disobedience on certain practical considerations after its continuance for fourteen months.

But the constitutional deadlock stiffened. Mr Amery's (Secretary of State for India) statement in the House of Commons on 22 April 1941, and also Mr Churchill's declaration on 9 September, 1941, that the Atlantic Charter was not applicable to India, aggravated discontent and distrust among the people. The District Magistrate of Patna reported to his Commissioner : 'The recent speech of the Prime Minister of England has caused wide discontent among Indians and those who are still on the fence have got an excuse to withhold their support to war efforts.' Deep discontent, repressed so far by force flared up into a mighty conflagration in 1942.

The Quit India Movement of 1942-3

The all-out Indian struggle of 1942 is one of the greatest upsurges of

modern history. The war menace had already taken an ominous turn and Japanese forces were threatening India almost at her very doors; the demands of her people for national government in order to be able to evoke countrywide response to combat it, were flouted by the Government. The Cripps proposals instead of solving the constitutional deadlock served as a great disillusionment. The situation became intolerable for India. At this critical hour, India threw an open challenge to British imperialism by asking the Government to quit this country to 'enable the people,' as Rajendra Prasad put it, 'to resist whoever wanted to dominate India, whether it be British or Japanese.' Even before the actual outbreak of the movement, Rajendra Prasad in consultation with some other leaders had prepared a draft programme for the guidance of the people. The leaders had rightly felt that the coming struggle was bound to be of gigantic magnitude. In fact, in India's epic struggle for liberty during 1942-3, Bihar played a brave role with unflinching determination in the face of the most ruthless repression. Many earned martyrdom in the prime of life.

Meeting at Bombay on 5 August 1942, the Working Committee of the Congress passed the famous resolution, later called the 'Quit India' resolution, repeating with all emphasis the demand for withdrawal of British power from India which it considered to be 'an urgent necessity both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the allied powers.' For the 'vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence', the Committee resolved to sanction the 'starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale' under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi. This resolution was fully endorsed by the All-India Congress Committee, held at Bombay on 7 and 8 August 1942. It was there that Mahatma Gandhi gave to the country the famous slogan of 'Do or Die'.

To prevent the outbreak of mass civil disobedience, the Government had already planned various measures which they sought to enforce promptly. In the early hours of the morning of 9 August, Mahatma Gandhi and all the members of the Congress Working Committee were arrested in Bombay. In Bihar too, Rajendra Prasad was arrested on 9 August and taken to Bankipur jail amidst shouts of 'Quit India', 'Gandhiji ki jai', 'Rajendra Babu ki jai'. Phulan Prasad Varma was soon taken there under arrest and within two or three days, Shrikrishna Sinha, Anugraha Narain Sinha and some other leaders of the province were arrested. The Congress offices and those

of allied organizations were declared illegal, and the police took possession of all of them.

Governmental repression however, failed to check mass upheaval. The fire of patriotism was burning in every heart. Students especially played a heroic role in this great struggle for freedom, inspired by the mantra, 'Do or Die'. Their varied activities would make a long tale of inspiration and bravery. What they exhibited at Patna on 11 August will ever be regarded as a classic example of heroism and martyrdom at the altar of liberty. That day is indeed a memorable day in the histroy of Bihar's national movement and it is justly being reckoned as 'The Martyr's Day'. A huge procession of thousands of inspired people with bands of students prominent marched in the afternoon with a view to hoisting the national flag on the building of the Patna Secretariat, the citadel of British bureaucracy in Bihar. At about 4-57 p.m. under orders of the District Magistrate of Patna, thirteen or fourteen rounds were fired from the precincts of the Secretariat at the approaching mass of people. As a result seven students who were in the forefront were killed, several others (about 25) were seriously injured, and some received minor injuries. The seven student martyrs were Umakant Prasad Sinha (Class XI of R. M. R. Seminary), Ramanand Singh (Class XI of R. M. Roy Seminary, Patna), Satish Prasad Jha (Class XI of Patna Collegiate School), Jagatpati Kumar (2nd year student of B. N. College, Patna), Devi Pada Chaudhury (Class XI of Miller H. E. School, Patna), Rajendra Singh (Matric class of Patna High School) and Ramgovind Singh (Matric class of Poonpoon H. E. School).

This noble sacrifice of seven students kindled a fire throughout the province which blazed forth into furious flames seeking to consume all the symbols of alien domination. As a logical sequel to this, a widespread popular upheaval broke out spontaneously. Unfortunately it took a violent turn occasionally with regard to all that stood for or helped the foreign government. To paralyse the administration which upheld British imperialism, agitators uprooted railway lines, damaged telegraph wires and telephones, attacked and at some places burnt police stations, seized post offices and other government buildings. These led to clashes with the machinery of administration, some officers of which were overpowered by popular fury.

But these unplanned violent activities were spontaneous outbursts against the 'leonine violence' used by the Government in removing

en masse the natural leaders of the people. Neither the Congress nor its leaders had sanctioned any programme on these lines. The movement, on the other hand, had a constructive aspect and emphasized the establishment of a people's rule by building up a structure of national government from the bottom. Experiments in this kind of Panchayat Raj were successfully made at some centres, especially in the Saharsa and Supaul areas.

The Government machinery felt no scruples about using every method of repression to suppress this movement. It became a veritable engine of tyranny to terrorize people. Besides indiscriminate and large-scale arrests and imprisonments, infliction of whipping and other kinds of torture were in evidence. Some areas sometimes were placed almost absolutely under the control of the military, who occasionally went beyond the orders of the civil authorities. Imposition of heavy collective fines, indiscriminate shooting of people by troops and police, looting of property, burning people's houses and intimidation in other ways became common. Life, property and even the honour of the fair sex were at stake. There were unrestrained military excesses. 'The disturbances,' stated Churchill, 'were crushed with all the might of government.' An imperialist to the tips of his fingers he observed: 'We mean to hold our own. I have not become the King's first minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire.' Mr L. S. Amery said in the House of Commons early in October 1942: 'During the recent disturbances mobs were five times machine-gunned from the air and after an aeroplane crash which occurred on 18 September in Bihar, in which the pilot was killed and the crew of the aircraft were murdered by a mob, it was found necessary to use aircraft to check sabotage by mobs... The measures taken by the Government of India to restore order in the circumstances, the seriousness of which is, I think, still imperfectly appreciated in this country, have my full support.'

By October—November 1942, there was an ebb in the movement. But it was not yet completely over. Intense governmental repression drove discontent underground and in the new phase of the movement many patriots of Bihar went to the Nepal Tarai, where they received sympathy and assistance from the local people. A few of them there collected arms, ammunition, spears and certain other weapons.

Some Bihar fighters confined in the Hazaribagh jail, felt an urge to dedicate themselves to the service of the motherland at that hour of trial. They came out in a miraculous way on Diwali night,

9 November 1942. They were Jai Prakash Narain, Ramnandan Misra, Yogendra Sukul, Suraj Narain Singh, Gulab Sonar and Shaligram Singh (Secretary of the Hazaribagh District Congress Committee). On suspicion of complicity in the escape plot, Ram Narain Singh, Krishna Ballabh Sahay and Sukhlal Singh were removed to the Bhagalpur jail. Large rewards were offered by Government for information about those who had escaped. Rs 5,000 each were offered for Jai Prakash Narain, Yogendra Sukul and Ramnandan Misra, and Rs 2,000 each for the other three.

Passing through jungles and tortuous ways, these daring heroes entered the boundary of the Gaya district where they divided themselves into two groups. One group consisting of Jai Prakash Narain, Ramnandan Misra and Shaligram Singh went towards Banaras and the other consisting of Yogendra Sukul, Suraj Narain Singh and Gulab proceeded to north Bihar. On secret information, the Police Superintendent of Muzaffarpur arrested Yogendra Sukul at Akharaghat. On 7 December, he was taken to Patna and then sent to Buxar jail. Two others of his group went towards Darbhanga and carried on secret activities there.

The gospel of the new phase of revolution was conveyed by the patriot Jai Prakash Narain in a circular letter addressed by him at the end of January 1943, to 'All Fighters for Freedom'. After explaining the meaning of violence as a means for uprooting alien rule, he observed: 'We have to prepare...organize and discipline our forces. In everything we do, we have constantly to bear in mind that ours is not merely to be conspiratorial action. It is total revolt of the masses; that is our objective.' So he advised 'intensive work among masses and peasants in villages, workers in factories, mines, railways and elsewhere, among the Indian Army and the services.' He made a special appeal to students.

At Nepal, Jai Prakash, with the active co-operation of Suraj Narain Singh and some others from Bihar as also Ram Manohar Lohia organized the Asad Dasta or guerilla bands to serve the country. The British Government managed to get them arrested in the month of May 1943 and they were confined in the Hanuman-nagar jail. But they were soon rescued by a band of workers under the guidance of Suraj Narain Singh and Sardar Nityanand Singh (chief instructor in the Nepal camp who shortly afterwards became a martyr at Sonbarsa). In a few months' time, Jai Prakash was overtaken by the police at Amritsar and arrested at Mughalpura. In Bihar proper,

some revolutionary groups still continued destructive activities to paralyse Government. The most active of these was known as 'Siyaram Dal' after the name of its leader Siyaram Singh. There were also some working in the Santhal Parganas.

Besides these activities of Congress Socialists, the Azad Dasta and the other revolutionary groups, silent and constructive work was being carried on by some Congressmen who were outside prison bars. They kept alive enthusiasm for the national struggle.

March to Independence

Lord Wavell, succeeded Lord Linlithgow as Governor-General of India in mid-October 1943, when the situation in this country was serious and complicated. Besides the war menace, constitutional deadlock and communal discord were two other serious problems. Unfortunately communal discord had been increasing. As against the Congress demand for 'Quit India', the Muslim League started the new slogan 'Divide and Quit'. The latter's demand for Pakistan stiffened, and the Provincial Muslim League in Bihar became enthusiastic about it. 'Pakistan,' observed Mr Jinnah in March 1945, 'is our irrevocable and unalterable national demand. We shall never accept any constitution on the basis of united India.' All this had unhappy reactions in Bihar.

As regards Congress affairs in Bihar in 1944 and 1945, we may note that, with the gradual release of national fighters, efforts for constructive work and social service revived; collection for the Kasturba Fund and the sale of khadi continued; and special occasions of national importance, viz., Independence Day, Gandhi Day, National Week and the anniversary of 9 August 1942 began to be celebrated. Some prominent Congress workers of Bihar, who had been absconding, were arrested in April 1944. Sucheta Kripalani was arrested at Patna on 28 April 1944.

It was in May 1944 that Gandhiji was released on grounds of health. The movement was kept alive as he did not finally withdraw the same for some length of time. But his release marked the beginning of fresh negotiations by Government which ultimately resulted in the Independence of India Act by the British Parliament in 1946.

On 19 September 1945, the British Prime Minister, Mr Attlee (Labour Party) and Lord Wavell made simultaneous announcements regarding steps to be taken by them for the solution of the Indian

constitutional problem. Expressing the hope that 'ministerial responsibility will be accepted by political leaders in all provinces' after election to Central and Provincial Legislatures to be held during the cold season of 1945-6, Lord Wavell announced the 'intention of His Majesty's Government to convene as soon as possible a constitution-making body' for which he had been authorized to hold 'preparatory discussions with elected representatives of British India and with Indian States' immediately after the elections. He further observed that 'His Majesty's Government are proceeding to the consideration of the content of the treaty which will require to be concluded between Great Britain and India' and that 'as soon as the result of the elections are published, to take steps to bring into being an Executive Council which will have the support of the main Indian parties.'

The Indian National Congress decided to contest the elections, 'if for nothing else than to demonstrate the revolutionary will of the people of India and to utilize the elections for furthering the struggle for the independence of India.' The untiring efforts of Rajendra Prasad and other Congress leaders of Bihar greatly facilitated Congress success in the elections. During the month of December 1945, out of the 10 seats for Bihar in the Central Assembly, the Congress obtained 6 general constituency seats. By the month of March 1946, election excitement subsided and the final position of parties was as follows in the Lower House of the Bihar Legislature consisting of 152 members:

Congress	98
Muslim League	34
Momins	5
Adivasis	3
Independent	12

On 30 March 1946, the Governor of Bihar formally asked for Shrikrishna Sinha's assistance in forming a Ministry. Shrikrishna Sinha, Anugraha Narain Sinha and Syed Mahmud took oaths of office and secrecy that day at 11 A.M. and Jaglal Choudhury was released from prison to become the fourth Minister. Within a few days, the Council of Ministers was expanded to include five more members, Ramcharitar Singh, Acharya Badrinath Varma, Krishna Ballabh Sahay, Pandit Binodanand Jha and Abdul Qaiyum Ansari. All sections of the people, excepting some extreme elements and members of the Muslim League, welcomed the formation of this Ministry.

Already on 12 April, the Government had lifted the ban on the Congress Socialist Party. The release of Jai Prakash Narain was a matter of joy in almost all quarters. He was accorded a hearty and enthusiastic reception on his arrival at Patna and speeches delivered by him at several meetings were heard with rapt attention. The Forward Bloc could not compromise with the Government. During March and April, Aurobindo Bose toured the Monghyr, Patna, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga districts and spoke at a number of meetings expressing his party's point of view. The Bihar Forward Bloc leader, Shilbhadra Yajee, was also active.

It was now obvious that the freedom of India could not be long delayed. 'India,' observed Mahatma Gandhi with his unerring foresight in 1946, 'is on the march to Independence. And it is coming, whether there is agreement between the League and Congress or not. It is her destiny. India has bled enough for it.' The newly-formed Labour Government in England with Mr Attlee as Prime Minister did not fail to realize the gravity of the situation. Mr Attlee observed in a speech on 15 March 1946 : 'The temperature of 1946 is not the temperature of 1920. I am quite certain that at the present time the tide of nationalism is running high in India and, indeed, all over Asia.' To meet the situation, the British Government sent to India a Cabinet Mission consisting of Lord Pethick Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade, and Mr A. V. Alexander.

The main recommendations of the Cabinet Mission were (*i*) a Union of India, embracing both British India and Indian States, dealing with subjects like Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications, (*ii*) Grouping of Provinces (A, B, C) and (*iii*) convening a constitution-making body. The Cabinet Mission proposals were not considered to be satisfactory by any section of the Indian people. The Muslim League accepted a Union centre for a period of 10 years and a separate grouping of six Muslim provinces. But the Congress accepted the long-term proposal contained in the Cabinet Mission statement of 16 May, and decided on 26 June to, 'join the proposed Constituent Assembly with a view to framing the constitution of a free, united and democratic India.'

In the month of July, elections to the Constituent Assembly mainly engaged the attention of all nationalists. The Congress nominees for Bihar included Dr Rajendra Prasad, the Hon'ble the Chief Minister, the Hon'ble the Finance Minister, Dr Sachchidanand Sinha, the

Hon'ble Mr Abdul Qaiyum Ansari, Shrimati Naidu and four other ladies. In the elections to the Constituent Assembly, a large majority of Congress members were returned. At this, the Muslim League withdrew its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Proposals and called upon 'Muslims to resort to direct action to achieve Pakistan as and when necessary.' The reaction was extremely unfortunate. It accentuated communal bitterness to an appalling degree, and on 16 August occurred one of the most dreadful tragedies in modern Indian history. The call by the Muslim League for 'direct action' in Calcutta on that day, produced carnage and inhuman atrocities, the horrors of which beggar description. 'The Statesman' described it as the 'Great Calcutta Killing'. There were no immediate repercussions in Bihar except one or two minor incidents.

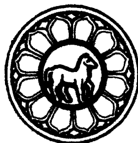
But tragedy was piled upon tragedy as communal frenzy rose to fever pitch inflicting hideous outrages on the Hindu population of East Bengal and seriously affecting Dacca, Noakhali and Tipperah. These produced violent reactions in Bihar at the end of October resulting in widespread communal disturbances in which Muslims suffered heavy casualties and losses. Immediate tours of Dr Rajendra Prasad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and some others in the affected areas in Bihar and prompt steps on the part of the Bihar Government checked further communal riots. Above all, the apostolic message of Mahatma Gandhi and his mission of peace and harmony in Bihar in March 1947 and again in April 1947 served to assuage smitten feelings and arrest the spread of communal madness.

Significant developments were taking place in political circles. The opening session of the Indian Constituent Assembly was held at Delhi on 9 December 1946, under the presidentship of Dr Sachchidanand Sinha, the most elderly of the members assembled and one of the brilliant representatives of Indian liberal statesmanship. He has always been known as a great son of Bihar. The non-participation of the Muslim League in the Constituent Assembly and its irreconcilable attitude complicated constitutional work. But on 20 February 1947, Mr Attlee made the momentous declaration that it was the British Government's 'definite intention to take necessary steps to effect the transference of power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948.' Lord Mountbatten came to India as successor to Lord Wavell in March 1947 and he accelerated India's march to a new status. In his plan of 3 June 1947, he outlined the procedure for transfer of power into Indian hands under the

prevailing circumstances. The plan had no doubt certain defects, the most serious of these being the proposed partition of India. While expressing regret that the plan of 3 June 1947, was 'likely to lead to the secession of certain parts of the country from India,' the All-India Congress Committee accepted these out of very practical considerations in view of the distressing conditions in the country.

General public opinion in Bihar realized the difficulties inherent in the situation. Though some regretted the division of the country, people on the whole reconciled themselves in 'a spirit of realism'. The nationalist Muslims were of the opinion that truncated Pakistan was really not at all in the interest of Indian Muslims, but the Muslim League circles were glad at the fulfilment of their demand for Pakistan. The Socialists and the Forward Bloc expressed disapproval of what they described as a policy of compromise.

According to the Indian Independence Act, India became free on 15 August 1947. It is a red-letter day in the history of our country. In Bihar, the celebration of Independence Day was marked by tremendous enthusiasm. 'Petty differences were forgotten in mass jubilation and there was universal rejoicing that India had attained freedom.' Shri Jairamdas Daulatram, appointed Governor of Bihar, took oath of office at midnight on 14 August. In the afternoon of 15 August, he laid the foundation stone of the martyrs' memorial at the spot in front of the Secretariat where the seven martyrs had sacrificed their lives for liberty. Indeed, if the blood of martyrs is the seed of religion, it is as true that the sacrifice of patriots is the foundation of national freedom.



XIX

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND CULTURE 1757—1947

A. Religious Beliefs and Social Conditions

THE period 1757 to 1947 is a very important one from many points of view. It is not only nearest to our own times, but it was during this period that western influences began to play powerfully on Indian society. As a result, there was a double movement which seemed contradictory, but which was in fact of the kind that is natural to every vital and living society when faced with new forces.

At the beginning of the period, there was nothing particular to be noted. Indian society, both Hindu and Muslim, continued to be what it had been in the previous period. With the advent of Christianity as a proselytizing religion, which penetrated the lower strata of society more through education, philanthropic activities and social welfare, than by force or fraud; with the impact of western science and technology, and the invasion of western ideas of democracy and liberal forms of government, India began to react. If India was to live as India, a synthesis was inevitable. This led to the double movement referred to above. While on the one hand there was a violent reaction and total rejection of everything western, there was on the other a powerful renascent movement which sought to assimilate western influences but at the same time sought to suck strength from its roots in ancient thought and culture of India. This led the best of our thinkers to the deepest foundations of our culture. At the same time they took to modern ways of thinking and acting in matters of material advancement and social institutions. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the renaissance had already begun and Raja Ram Mohan Roy (died 1832) is rightly called the Father of the Indian Renaissance. That wave is still continuing and it may require another quarter of a century before it reaches its peak.

Since the beginning of the renaissance till the present time, it may be said that four waves of thought and movement have swept over India with greater or less intensity and have influenced different parts of the country with varying degrees of emphasis. The Brāhmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, and the immense wave of the national movement have influenced India during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A national movement led by Tilak and Aurobindo could not do otherwise than have a profound influence on Bihar. The religious, political and social life lived by progressive society in Bihar today is the result of the play of these various influences in different degrees.

Bihar has always been predominantly Hindu. The population is nowadays about seventy-seven per cent Hindu, eleven per cent Muslim, ten per cent Adivasis and one per cent Christian. At the beginning of the period, the religious and social conditions continued to be as they had always been. The changes started when the play of western and modern forces began and Bihar reacted to them. It was the higher-class Hindus who were the most affected and next to them the Adivasis. The Muslims were more conservative.

During the first half of the 19th century, there arose in Eastern India the Brāhmo Samaj movement which was the earliest form of protestant Hinduism in modern India. It sought to correct certain vagaries and superstitions, to simplify worship by resorting to strict monotheism without any image of God, to restrict invocations to one God in prayer, to abolish the caste-system, to educate women and give them equal rights, and to emphasize the ideal of a Kingdom of God on earth with its social and humanitarian corollaries. This movement, which spread among the higher classes in Bengal and Bihar, was founded in Calcutta in the year 1828 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy who had begun life as a Serishtedar in the office of the Deputy Commissioner at Ramgarh in the Hazaribagh district. Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, Keshav Chandra Sen, Rabindranath Tagore and Jagadish Chandra Bose, the great scientist, were some of the prominent leaders of the Brāhmo Samaj who visited Bihar. Besides them, there were the Brāhmo missionaries like Trailakya Nath Sanyal, Nagendra Nath Chatterjee, Gurudas Chakravarti, Braj Gopal Neogy and others who visited most of its districts.

Though the number of converts to this sect was small their influence was widespread and abiding especially among the intellectuals. It was mostly confined to Bengali families but Brāhmo Samaj

mandirs existed in almost all the advanced districts of Bihar, such as Patna, Gaya, Bhagalpur, Muzaffarpur and Ranchi. Besides being a religious movement, the Brāhmo Samaj was a great force for social reform. It declared war against the caste system and the seclusion of women under purdah (veil). It raised its protest against the baneful institution of child marriage and favoured the remarriage of widows. It was responsible for the opening of many educational and other welfare institutions, the most prominent of which in Bihar were the Ram Mohan Roy Seminary at Patna, the charitable homeopathic dispensary at Hazaribagh, the Patna Brāhmo Samaj and the mental hospital with a charitable homeopathic dispensary at Lalpur, Ranchi. However, though the Brāhmo Samaj movement in Bihar did not reach the masses, and was confined to a few thousands of families, the influence of Brāhmo thought liberalized Hinduism here to a very great extent and stimulated new trends and introspection.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the Arya Samaj movement, started in the Punjab by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, had its impact on the life of the Hindus in Bihar. It was another and far more powerful reform movement which aimed at purging Hinduism of all the accretions after Vedic times. The Samaj rejected idolatry and advocated Vedic simplicity in worship through Homa and prayers. An important aspect of its work was the prevention of conversion from Hinduism to Islam or Christianity. It rejected the complicated caste-system and sought to introduce the system of the four Varṇas. It particularly appealed to the lower castes. Simplified marriage without dowry, widow remarriage, dispensing with purdah and efforts in the direction of education, especially of women, were its main contributions to social reform. The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College and schools in Bihar are its creations. Though its influence was never very widespread, it acted as a stimulating group within the Hindu fold and served to introduce modern trends of thought.

The Theosophical movement (1875), with its headquarters at Banaras, had an influence on the intelligentsia in Bihar because of its element of mysticism as well as its attempts at a rational and scientific explanation of the principles of Hinduism. At one time, many branches were working actively in Bihar.

Other religious movements having some appeal for the intelligentsia are the teachings of Ramakrishna and the cult of Sri Aurobindo. Though their high moral principles and intellectualism have confined

their direct influence to a few, it can be said that almost every English-educated Hindu was influenced by the gospel of Ramakrishna as conveyed by Swami Vivekanand. The Ramakrishna mission has to its credit many humanitarian activities, such as flood relief, famine relief, free medicine, help to poor students and so on.

ISLAMIC BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

After the Hindus, the most numerous single community are the Mussalmans. From the point of view of religion, there seems to have been no reformist movement among them. Socially speaking, the Mussalmans recognized two main divisions: The Ashroff and the Ajlaf. Pre-eminent in the first category are the Syeds, who claim descent from the Prophet. Others in this group are the Moghals, Iranis, Afghans, Pathans and so on. In the second group, named after their vocations, such as Momins, Kunjras and many Muslim castes Jolha, Dhunia, Dhobi, Kalal, Chick, Lalbegi and others, are included. The lower Muslim classes who are mostly converts, sometimes continue to hold various Hindu beliefs and to stick to superstitions regarding illness and evil spirits. A few Ashroff families in Shahabad, called 'Muleks', live entirely by reciting poetry describing the love of Rādhā and Kṛishṇa. They also worship certain saints and make offerings at tombs and Dargahs. The most important festival of the Shia Mussalmans is the 'Moharram' which commemorates the death of the martyrs Hassan and Hussain, grandsons of the Prophet. Many Hindus joined in the Moharram festival during the period under review and only discontinued doing so when communal tension began to mount and emphasize separatism. With regard to the religious division among Muslims, the Sunnis far outnumber the Shias.

The Wahabis are a numerous body, among whom are included a few wealthy traders, though the majority belong to the lower classes. Many of them go to extremes in their opposition to both Sunnis and Shias, though Wahabism is really but a branch of the Sunni faith. They call themselves 'Non-imitators', because, like other Sunnis, they do not acknowledge the four Imams. They profess a very strict form of morality, repudiating the more extravagant forms and ceremonies of the Muhammadan faith; and, above all, they devote themselves to Jihad, or sacred war. Firmly convinced that Sayyid Ahmad will re-appear and destroy all infidels, they believe that the first duty of every true Mussalman is to further the cause to the best of his ability.

All who die fighting for the faith are martyrs, all who destroy infidels are heroes and those who do not give their wealth in support of the cause are accursed.

Patna was first visited by Sayyid Ahmad, the leader of the Wahabi movement in India, about the year 1820; ever since, the city has been a great centre for the collection of money and recruits, both of which were forwarded to the North-West Frontier. At the time of the mutiny the leader of the sect was Ahmad-Ulla, who was arrested by the Commissioner, but appears to have regained the confidence of the Government, and eventually been made a Deputy Collector. The first raid on the Patna Wahabis was in 1864, when eleven persons were arrested. Among them were Ahmad-Ulla's brother and nephew, who were subsequently sentenced to transportation. Ahmad-Ulla was himself suspected at the time, but there was insufficient proof of his guilt, and he was not arrested till the close of the year. He was then tried by the Judge of Patna, and on 27 February 1865, was sentenced to death, the sentence afterwards being commuted by the High Court to transportation for life.

POSITION OF WOMEN

Writers, including some Indians, have often painted Indian womanhood in a deplorable light. S. C. Bose, writing in about 1881, stated that from infancy to old age her existence presented a uniform picture of gloom, uncertainty, despondency and neglect. In her case, bitterness far outbalanced the sweets of life. The public appearance of women was forbidden and condemned. The purdah system prevailed. While going out she was carefully screened from public view. Purdah was recognized even by the British Courts. Ladies of high rank were examined either on Commission or by the Judge himself and their evidence was heard through the double screen of the palanquin. The purdah came to be a mark of wealth and rank. Even Rajput ladies were not above it and the part some of them played in the great and small revolutions of their time was from behind the purdah.

The degree of seclusion differed from place to place. Some women at Dariapur and in the Patna district, for instance, were not so strict as were those in Bhagalpur. Those of Banka were more timid than those of Bengal, but not more so than those of Purnea. Purdah was never observed among the lower castes. The seclusion of women came to be looked upon in the higher ranks of society as more of a privilege than a punishment. There was no reason to suppose that the

women who remained shut up were dissatisfied with their lot. Never having experienced liberty, they could hardly pine for it. Purdah was associated in fact with the idea of respectability and as a proof of their husband's love! It cannot be said that all purdah women were ignorant. Buchanan found ten or twelve Hindu ladies in the district of Shahabad who had acquired the art of reading and writing. About twenty of them in Koranja could sign their names and understand accounts, while some in Tilouthu not only wrote a fair hand but understood the poetical compositions of Tulsidas. At Nathpur in Purnea he found an old woman who had acquired a reputation for extracting stones from the bladder. Some form of education was usually given in aristocratic families at that time. Buchanan writes that females of the lower classes at Patna and Biharsharif were given to intrigue and he placed a black mark against the Gayawals and retail sellers of green vegetables and fish. But this picture of depravity was not justified. Indian women were generally modest, chaste and high-principled. Kulin Brāhmaṇas sometimes married many wives and visited each of them only three or four times in a lifetime. But the latter preserved their virtue. Even Buchanan had to admit that Indian women in general possessed a very fair character.

Women in India always had a strong sense of religion and were ready to undergo any amount of suffering for it. Woman was the priestess of the home. She watered the sacred plant, kept the sacrificial fire, guarded sacramentally the purity of food, and was busy offering ablutions and prayer.

The birth of a son was looked upon as an honour, a necessity and an advantage but a daughter was sometimes regarded as an encumbrance. Men were initiated into the mysteries of religion and taught to perform various rites and ceremonies, but women's religious exercises were simpler. At Manihari in Bhagalpur, they were not allowed to pray or make offerings or to be present at sacrifices or to partake of offerings like men, but they could join after the sacrifices at the feast provided for the occasion. Men usually looked upon their wives as a part of their possessions rather than as life-companions. Women could not speak freely, even if the husband's character was loose. But the slightest doubt cast on a wife's character was enough to spell ruin for her. Indians, however, have never shown any contempt, indelicacy, or want of affection towards women. They received the highest respect in public and had no insults to dread. In certain cases women inherited property. A widow's claim upon her husband's

property was conceded by ancient authorities. The position of the wife was more independent than is supposed and she had much influence on her husband. The family system also contributed to the power of women. She was the 'grahiṇi' or mistress of the household. There was an equitable division of labour between men and women so that time did not hang heavy on them. The women of the house ate after the men out of respect for them. They were seldom treated harshly. It may be said that the treatment of the wife depended many a time on the disposition of the husband.

The condition of widows in the higher castes was said to be unenviable, but it must be remembered that they were always treated with consideration and those who were elderly acted as guides and advisers to the younger folk. A woman who lost her husband led a life of enforced widowhood. Usually she led a life of abstinence and did not partake of the joys of life. She would not wear good clothes or ornaments and would not attend auspicious ceremonies such as weddings. Prohibition to remarry was very strict only among Brāhmaṇas, Rajputs, Kayasthas and some of the Banias. But remarriage was current and easy among other castes. Buchanan stated that among the Hindus, more than three-fourths of the young widows could remarry. There were peculiar ceremonies for 'Sagai'. The Sagai wife had all the rights and position of a regular wife.

Abolition of Sati and Legalization of Widow Remarriage

Sati or the practice of widows immolating themselves on the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands was an ancient Indian custom invested with sacred virtue but actually followed by few. By the eighteenth century however, it had developed into a curse, especially in eastern India where, in some cases even unwilling widows were forced to commit sati by interested relatives. As early as 1789, Mr M. H. Brooke, Collector of Shahabad, wrote in the course of a letter to Lord Cornwallis, that in spite of its policy of non-interference in religious matters, the Government should prohibit a practice 'at which humanity shuddered.' However, the authorities were afraid of checking the practice lest it led to grave consequences including disaffection in the army. Between 1815 and 1817 there were as many as 98 cases of sati in the Patna division alone. In 1817, by an executive order, the burning of those widowed mothers who had children between four and seven years of age was prohibited. This

was a circular order having no legal sanction. The abolition of sati became possible owing to a combination of three forces i.e. (*a*) measures adopted on the ground of administrative necessity by the Company's government in India, (*b*) attempts on the part of Christian missionaries and (*c*) the growth of an enlightened public opinion as part of the Indian Renaissance. As against this, there was an orthodox party which sent a petition to the Government demanding the repeal of the circular orders of 1812, 1815 and 1817. Raja Ram Mohan Roy then sent a counter-petition. Roy even went to the burning ghats himself in order to prevent sati sacrifices by means of earnest persuasion. In 1818 he published his first tract on the abolition of sati. In 1820, came the second tract which he dedicated to the Marchioness of Hastings and that contained a passionate appeal on behalf of women in general and Indian women in particular. In 1828, Lord William Bentinck resolved to deal with the question without delay. He elicited opinion on the possible effects of the abolition of sati and when no danger was reported, it was abolished by Regulation XVII in December 1829. The orthodox party presented a petition for the annulment of the Regulation and even pursued the matter in England, but owing to the efforts of Raja Ram Mohan Roy who was then in England, their appeal was rejected by the Privy Council.

To this day occasional cases of sati are attempted and even accomplished. Those who sacrifice themselves are looked upon with reverence. The recent tendency on the part of some Hindus to justify everything medieval or ancient has encouraged the suppressed practice to rise again. Two cases were reported in the Gaya district in 1901 and 1903. At Barh there was an abetted sati case in November 1929 and in 1930 a widow in the Hazaribagh district attempted to immolate herself.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was also an advocate of widow remarriage. In 1835 there was a demand for an enactment on the subject in the journal 'Samachar Darpan' and the persistent efforts of Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and others led finally to the Act of 1856, which legalized widow remarriage and declared the legitimacy of the issue of remarried widows. Within a few months of the enactment, the marriage of a widow of high family was celebrated.

The vast majority of Bihari women are no longer in purdah and education is fast spreading among them. The national awakening, the ideals of democracy and of equality before the law, have been liberalising the attitude of society towards the status of women. In

the wake of these influences came Gandhiji's encouragement to women to enter politics and public life. As a result, they have entered politics as well as social welfare work and taken to such professions as education, medicine and law. Many of them are in the legislature. They now no longer think of themselves as the weaker sex and are prepared to face the rough and tumble of life with the men-folk. But marriage and the home still have a natural fascination for most of our young women.

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

Marriage customs among the Hindus continued to be what they were during earlier periods. Hindu fathers preferred to get their children married at an early age. In fact it was one of the primary obligations of their lives. The Khatris practised infant marriage and so did the Kayasthas. All Brāhmaṇas married their daughters when they were no more than four to five years old. Agrawals married them when they reached nine years of age. Among the lower Sūdras the Beldars practised infant marriage. The Dhobis of Bihar married their daughters between the ages of five and twelve. But it should be remembered that all these were betrothals, and consummation was allowed only after puberty. It appears that among the lower castes, girls were married earlier, generally under five years of age. Buchanan had even heard of a rich Sūdra in Purnea losing his caste for permitting his daughter to remain single up to the age of eighteen. The high amount of bride-price sometimes delayed marriages to some extent. But the custom of child marriage has almost disappeared among the educated classes and is also disappearing in other strata of society, though the pace is rather slow.

In some cases, different rules affected the field of matchmaking. One such rule restricted the circle within which the man must marry. Every person had to marry within his own subcaste. Exogamy forbade members supposed to be descended from a common ancestor or associated with a certain locality, to intermarry. In castes where there were 'gotras' (traditional common ancestors) 'gotra' exogamy was generally the rule. But this was common only among the Brāhmaṇas, Rajputs, and other high castes. In some cases, marriage was not allowed within the same village and the village was an exogamous unit. But the most prevalent rule of exogamy was 'sapinda' (of the same blood), by which marriage was prohibited between parties who had common ancestors up to seven or five generations

on the father's side and five or three generations on the mother's.

Many instances are to be found of Hindus marrying girls belonging to inferior social groups within the same caste, according to the principle of hypergamy. The Maithil Brāhmaṇas had a complete system of hypergamy for which purpose they were divided into a number of groups in descending order. Men of the higher groups married into lower ones on receiving payment of considerable sums. But they were lowered in social esteem and the children of such unions, though higher than the original class of their mothers were not considered as socially equal to the members of their father's class. The rule in Bihar was more lax than in Bengal. It was considered right in Bihar for a girl to be married within her own group or within a group higher than her own, but it was not absolutely necessary for her to do so. Cases did occur of a girl of a higher class being married to a man of a lower class on the payment of a bride-price to the father of the girl.

Another great restriction to marriage came from the bride and bridegroom prices (dowry) that were demanded. The former was generally found only among the higher castes of Bihar, but it prevailed also among some of the lower classes. The amount paid depended in most cases upon the social status of the parties concerned, but sometimes, as in the case of Kumhars, it depended on the customs of the caste. The age of the bridegroom, as among Rajbansis, the virginity or otherwise of the girl, as among Tirhutia Mushars, or the beauty and accomplishments of the girl had also something to do with it. The bride-price wherever paid failed to cover all the expenses of a marriage. The financial burden had still to be divided between the bride's side and that of the bridegroom. The custom of a bridegroom-price gained notoriety amongst the Kulins, whose bridegrooms raised their prices in proportion to the demand and to the risk involved in forfeiting their titles for property. Marriages were generally performed at the house of the bride. After the marriage rites were completed the bride was taken to the bridegroom's house. But custom in this matter differed from place to place and caste to caste. Marriage amounted to mere betrothal and the wife never entered her husband's house nor cohabited with him until she had reached the age of maturity. In certain places, such as Mithila, the bride was taken to the bridegroom's house on the very day the marriage was performed.

Theoretically, Hindus could marry any number of wives. In

practice, it was rare. Certain people of the higher castes could afford to have more than one wife. The Babhans might marry two sisters and the number of wives depended upon their ability to maintain them. The Dhanuks of Purnea accepted no limit on the number of wives but the most glaring instance of polygamy was in the case of the Kulins of Mithila.

Muslims were permitted to have as many as four wives. However, polygamy could not be said to be common in Bihar. The vast majority of people were monogamous. Polygamy was troublesome, as it led to quarrels in the family.

Some rich Hindus, as well as Muslims, maintained concubines, whose ranks were replenished from various professional castes, widows, adulteresses, maid-servants and so on. In the district of Patna and Bihar many Rajputs, Khatris and Kayasthas openly kept women of any caste, but not in their homes. The fruits of such unions were called 'Krishnapakchhis'. This kind of debased luxury has however, almost disappeared.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

Till the influence of western or European fashion began to tell, older fashions in dress and ornaments continued. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the English-educated, as well as those who had to come into contact with high European officials, began imitating European fashions. Women were much slower in this matter and very few of them were influenced. Even now it may be said that a very small number of people have adopted the European style of living, though tables, chairs, crockery, tea and coffee drinking and such other things have come into vogue. With regard to ornaments, there is a general tendency among the higher and educated classes towards simplicity, but the adoption of the western type of ornaments is rare. Till recent times, Hindus and Muslims wore dhotis or pyjamas, kurtas or shirts. Educated people working in towns now put on trousers and shirts or bush-shirts, while quite a few wear full European dress. It is only on ceremonial occasions that kurtas, churidar pyjamas and sherwanis are the vogue.

Ablutions are enjoined on the Hindus by their religion. People of rank used 'atar' and other perfumes. Perfumed oils were also used. Very few ornaments were worn by boys and men. In Bihar, men usually wore 'bala' or 'bali' in Shahabad, 'kanausi' in Patna and Gaya, and 'kundal' was largely worn by Gwalas. People also

wore 'malas' or bead necklaces. There were specific ornaments for arms, wrists and fingers.

Those women who could afford it, used aromatic oils and wore profuse jewellery. Particular care was taken to wash the hair and it was arranged in different styles. Tattooing was a prevalent practice. In Purnea, no orthodox Hindu would drink water from a girl's hand unless she was tattooed. Married women painted their foreheads and the parting of the hair with vermilion. Tikali, a silver spot, and bindi, a round one, were also placed between the forehead and the eyebrows respectively. The eyelids of both Hindu and Muslim ladies were pencilled with 'kajal' or an antimony preparation called 'surma'. A variety of ornaments constituted the delight of all classes of women. Ornaments covered the head, forehead, face, nose and ear. Round the neck, hung several chains of gold and silver. Some had collars of gold. Chandrahar, tilri, panchlari, satlari, sikri were the names of some of the different types of necklaces with balls. There were various ornaments for arms, wrists, elbows and fingers. The waist and legs were not free from ornaments. Below the waist, the ornaments were generally of silver. Bangles were as popular among all classes of people as they are to-day. There has been a change in the fashion and variety of ornaments, but there is no diminution in the love of them. The lead in the case of all fashions, whether sartorial or ornamental, seems to have passed to cinema stars and city tailors who are for ever designing new things.

B. Varṇa and Āśrama

The concept of caste is very elusive, because for people in different ages and climes it has had a different connotation. Ever changing in its details, it has been the backbone of the Indian social system. It is not confined to Hindus alone but is found to persist in some form or other among Indian Muslims, and is found alive among Christian converts generations after conversion. Although social institutions which resemble caste in one respect or another are not difficult to find in other countries, it is peculiarly an Indian phenomenon, especially its hierarchical gradation of high and low. No institution as complex and elaborate exists elsewhere. The variety and complexity of the social forces which produced the caste system were not to be found in any other country.

Generally speaking, a caste is a group having a common origin, a common social organization and a common occupation and whose

members eat and drink together and intermarry. It has been found difficult to define caste in a way which will apply to the whole of India and which will always hold true. Some castes, such as the Rajputs, have no common origin, higher castes have no common caste organization, occupations may be chosen at will and the members of one caste may not eat or dine together or intermarry. Exceptions are so numerous that generalization is rendered useless. Varṇa is not caste though it is commonly confused with it. Varṇa means the fourfold division of Ṛigvedic society which consisted of three of the twice-born or dwij as, Brāhmaṇa, Kshatriya and Vaisya, and the fourth the Śūdra, below whom are the outcastes. The twice-born are so called because of the initiation or upanayan ceremony at which they put on the sacred thread as a symbol of introduction to a life of spiritual discipline. In early times it was possible for a person to pass from one varṇa to another in the upper three categories. But today each varṇa is a conglomeration of castes. Among Brāhmaṇas, there is nothing in common between the Sakaldwipi Brāhmaṇas, the Maithili or the Gayawal. Similarly the Rajput, Kshatriya and Khatri are entirely distinct castes. Among the Vaisyas, some are supposed to be pure and respectable while others are degraded to the Śūdra class.

Each caste is divided into a number of sub-castes which are smaller endogamous groups inside a caste. The reasons for the formation of a subcaste are numerous. Even residence or settling down in a different region away from the original homeland for long stretches of time has led to the formation of different subcastes. The adoption or abandonment of a degrading occupation, a difference of occupations even if not degrading, variation in social practices, pollution incurred by one section of a caste, a split in the governing body, the greater prosperity of one section compared to the rest and so on, are among the factors that promote fission in a caste. How difference in occupation led to the formation of subcastes can be illustrated from the Doms. They are divided into Banukias, who breed silk worms, Dai-Doms whose women act as midwives, Tapaspurias, who remove dead bodies and dig the trenches which form the base of the funeral pyre, Ghaseras, who cut grass, Kalindis, who are cultivators and basket-makers, Kauras, who breed pigs, Bansphors, who make bamboo baskets, Chapariyas, who make bamboo frames for roofs, and so on. This led Risley to compare caste to an organism of the lower type which grows by fission or cell division. The practice of

taking wives from the lower castes by higher castes is called 'anuloma' or hypergamy. It is looked upon as a preferable form of marriage. Its reverse, 'pratiloma', is prohibited as being against the social code. This has in many cases resulted in putting a price on the bridegroom instead of on the bride. The rising rates of bridegroom-price is a social evil of great magnitude in Bihar and attempts made to remove it by legislation have not yet succeeded. Strong public opinion alone seems to be capable of dealing with it.

Caste seems to be capricious in its inhibitions and taboos. A Hindu may not allow his child to eat with a Muslim, Christian, or a European but he would allow him to attend a school taught by the latter. The Sakaldwipi Brāhmaṇa will not eat parboiled rice, but would not object to eating grain parched by a Kandu, or baked bread, or anything fried in ghee, by a Śūdra. Solid food, if wetted and oiled and passed through the hands of inferior caste people is looked upon as impure, but is eaten if perfectly dry. With regard to cloth, silk and vegetable fibre such as jute, are not made impure by the touch of inferior castes, but cotton cloth is. A Brāhmaṇa physician will not feel the pulse of a Śūdra without wrapping his hand in silk. Likewise hide and leather are impure but the skins of tigers and antelopes are not. Caste is not lost if a Hindu commits theft or forgery, but at one time was lost if he was transported beyond the seas. The Gareries work as domestic servants, but refuse to carry bathing water for their masters and to rinse their clothes after they have bathed. The meat used for the morning sacrifice, is the perquisite of Brāhmaṇa and some Śūdra castes, but everything in the evening belongs to the Bhuinmalis.

Strong prejudices existed during the period against certain things as part of caste taboos. Among Brāhmaṇas a few sections abstained from eating meat and eggs as also all bulbous roots such as onions or vegetables which assumed the shape of mushrooms. Beef has for centuries been looked upon with extreme horror by Hindus but pork and buffalo meat are eaten by low castes. Food had to be cooked by a person of one's own or a superior caste, otherwise it was contaminated. If cooking was done in the open, food kept in a circle smeared with a mixture of cowdung and water, was considered pure. There were restrictions also on smoking and drinking water. People had to marry within their own subcaste. There was no social intercourse between high and low castes. Men of different castes would not walk together along the same road, nor sit on the same mat

beside each other under the same roof, and sometimes even in the same street. No Śūdra could live in a Brāhmaṇa quarter. Expulsion from a caste meant and included abstaining from eating, drinking, smoking, marrying or holding social intercourse with the person expelled. This punishment was inflicted on those who brought disgrace on the caste by unchastity, journeying to foreign countries across the seas, eating prohibited food, cohabiting with low caste women, and dealing in prohibited things such as cowhides. The penalty was regulated more by an arbitrary ceremonial code and administered by the caste organization rather than by the commonly accepted laws of morality. Great commandments might be broken, but the infringement of some trivial custom, even unintentionally, would involve a penalty. Expulsion or excommunication was the most severe of all punishments, but it was not so bad as it is often thought to be. The expelled person was certainly cut off from his own caste folk, but he did not in any sense become an alien. He met with much the same treatment as before, so far as the general public was concerned. There was a full-fledged procedure for the readmission of such persons into the caste. Sometimes the descendants of such persons formed a different subcaste when the expulsion was final. The facility for an expelled person to rejoin his caste depended much on the friendly relations which existed between him and the influential members of the caste.

The State does not seem to have tried to exercise control over the internal affairs of castes. So, castes govern themselves. The higher castes have as a rule no controlling agency as such and there is no constituted authority to hear complaints and pass judgements. In Purnea, in the early nineteenth century the higher castes had panchayats of their own presided over by the most learned and wealthy persons in the neighbourhood. A Brāhmaṇa generally assisted at the assemblies of Kshatriyas and Kayasthas. In Patna and Shahabad, Brāhmaṇa assemblies were called 'samooh'. No chief was recognized however among the Kayasthas and other higher castes. Among the lower castes, there is still a mechanism for caste justice. This is the caste panchayat. The actual jurisdiction of caste government has certain definite limits. Membership to the caste is limited by the fact of birth. Sometimes the subcaste is a unit. The strength of the group is necessarily determined by territorial considerations. If a group is widely dispersed, there may be several panchayats. The power to outcaste its members is the basis of the authority of each

group. This power is also dependent on the co-operation of the priest, barber and washerman.

Among the Brāhmaṇas, Babhans, Rajputs and Kayasthas, there is now no organization for the detection and punishment of breaches of caste rules. Action has to be taken by members on their own initiative. If the offence is open and well known, they at once cease to have any contact with the offender. If it is doubtful, an informal gathering of the influential people of the caste discusses the issue and chalks out a line of action. The burden of proof of innocence is on the suspected person. If found guilty, penalties are prescribed after consulting pandits. Then penances and ceremonies of expiation have to be performed. Among the purificatory penances, mention may be made of, (*i*) going on pilgrimage for an appointed period, (*ii*) bathing in the Ganga and swallowing its sand, (*iii*) living on alms for a prescribed time, (*iv*) remaining silent for an appointed time, (*v*) taking only one meal in twenty-four hours, (*vi*) swallowing a mixture of five products of the cow (panchgavya) and (*vii*) fasting. Ceremonies for expiation consist of sacrifice, worship of Satyanārāyan, making gifts of a cow, heifer and so on, to the family priest and feeding Brāhmaṇas and fellow castemen.

Most of the lower castes have an organized system of caste government. The unit consists of a Chatai, which literally means a mat. It connotes those who have the right to sit together at a caste council meeting. The area to which a Chatai corresponds depends on the strength of the caste in a particular locality. Each Chatai has a standing committee consisting of one, two, or three functionaries. In South Bihar the headman is called the Sardar. The Vice-President is called the Manjan. The third member, who is called the Chharidar, acts as the Sardar's messenger. It is his duty to convene the panchayat and he is responsible for the execution of its decrees. In some panchayats these officers hold office by hereditary right, in others they are elected for life. These posts are coveted, as they carry prestige and authority.

In North Bihar the head of the panchayat unit is called a Mandal. A number of Mandals are headed by a Sardar whose secretary is known as a Barik or Diwan and over and above them is the Baisi. But the Sardar is now becoming obsolete.

In some parts, caste officials are given recognized fees or perquisites. In Purnea the triumvirate of Dusadhs received presents of clothes. The Goala Raja who presided over panchayats got cloth

and one rupee. Among other castes, presents are made at the time of a marriage. The Chharidar gets a commission of one or two annas on the amount he collects. Among the Chamars of Banka, the Sardar gets one-fourth of the panchayat's income, the rest being spent on feasts. Among the Bhars of Shahabad there is a headman in every village called the Manjan whose office is elective. The Hajams of Patna have two hereditary officers called the Sardar and the Chharidar.

Besides breaches of caste rules and etiquette, cases of adultery, seduction and elopement are also disposed of by panchayats. In dealing with caste affairs, caste tribunals frequently encroach upon the jurisdiction of civil and criminal courts. The punishments awarded in such cases are briefly, (*i*) outcasting, either temporary or permanent, (*ii*) fines, (*iii*) feasts to castemen, (*iv*) corporal punishment and (*v*) among the better classes, prāyaschitta. A man is permanently outcasted for grave offences such as taking food from a person of a lower caste or marrying a woman of a lower class and refusing to leave her. Adultery and engaging in forbidden occupations sometimes lead to outcasting. For minor offences, the culprit may be fined or be made to provide a feast for his fellow castemen.

Similar caste government obtains among Muslim sects, such as the Nats of Champaran and the Jolahas of Shahabad.

IMPORTANT CASTES IN BIHAR

The Brāhmaṇas who held themselves together better than any other castes, still take precedence over the rest. Their place in the hierarchy of castes is due mostly to their being in charge of religion and therefore commanding the respect that is usually shown to priests. All Brāhmaṇas however were not priests. Many castes have their own. Priests were also recruited from the monastic orders. Some Brāhmaṇas supported themselves on what they received during holidays and festivals, from families under their spiritual care. Gifts to temples, of houses, lands, ponds, orchards and so on in perpetuity, also formed a means of support to the priests in charge. In return the donors expected worship of the gods in the respective temples on their behalf. Some Brāhmaṇas earned their living by teaching Sanskrit. Astrological predictions, the pointing out of auspicious and inauspicious days on the basis of the position of heavenly bodies and the reading of palms, also formed a good source of income. Thousands of Brāhmaṇas maintained themselves by merchandise and

farming and by acting as soldiers in the army and peons in government offices. Some Brāhmaṇas acted as dancing masters to girls dedicated to the temples. Others lived by cooking. They were split up into numerous sub-divisions, of which Sāraswats, Kānyakubjas, Sakaldwīpis, Maithils, and so on, were in good numbers. There were Brāhmaṇas who had become degraded because of acting as priests for the low castes, as also by performing the office of Kantāha or Mahāpātra who received gifts at śrādha ceremonies. All these different groups were endogamous and each was divided into a number of clans and gotras. The Brāhmaṇas still continue to be objects of veneration and receive generous gifts from the common people; but they have lost much of the unqualified reverence which they had once claimed and received. Even Professor Wilson admitted that invitations and presents to Brāhmaṇas, during ceremonial rites and festivals were due not to the love that people bore for learning and intellectual eminence but on account of their character and office. In the world of trade, commerce and business the Brāhmaṇa has entered the field on the same footing as others, and no preference is shown because of his birth. It is his industry and skill alone that stand him in good stead. Some Sāraswat Brāhmaṇas in Bihar were landholders, a few were wholesale merchants while others officiated as priests for royal families. The Kānyakubjas acted as teachers, priests, cultivators, soldiers, messengers, clerks and accountants, traders or cooks.

The Babhans have always been a large and influential caste in Bihar. They had Brāhmaṇical gotras, titles and family names as also similar customs. They use the Brāhmaṇical titles and surnames of Misra, Pande and Tīwari along with the Rajput ones of Rai, Singh and Thākur. They perform half the rites prescribed for a Brāhmaṇa. In Shahabad they were accorded praṇām (greetings) usually reserved for Brāhmaṇas but further south this practice was unknown. In Shahabad it was the Babhaṇ who gave the first greeting to the Kāyastha. Their position varied in different parts. In south-east Bihar, they ranked immediately below the Kāyasthas but in Shahabad and Saran, they were on the same level as the Rajputs. Their sectional names appear to be of two types: territorial, referring either to some very early settlement of the section or to the birthplace of its founder, and eponymous, the eponym being in most cases a Vedic ṛishi. The names and forms of clans correspond with or were closely related to those current among the Rajputs but some names were Brāhmaṇical. They are chiefly cultivators by occupation,

a profession usually looked upon as being beneath the dignity of a Brāhmaṇa. A great majority of them are zamindars and have assumed secular titles of Raja and Maharaja like the Rajputs.

The Rajputs claim to be the direct descendants of the Kshatriyas. This is not acknowledged in particular localities. In parts of Purnea and Bhagalpur, they are considered inferior to scribes, physicians and merchants. Generally, however, they are regarded to be pure Kshatriyas. This is so in Mithilā, Patna and Shahabad. They are in general a proud race. There are many distinctions among them based mostly on the region to which they belong. There are a number of clans among them, quite a few of which are found in Bihar. A good many of the Rajputs are cultivators, thekedars and zamindars. Many of them have taken to trade, or sought service in the army, or the police, or as gatekeepers. In Purnea they have almost lost their military spirit.

There are many others claiming Kshatriyahood. The Khetauris in Bhagalpur claim to be Kshatriyas and so do the Khatris. The Khatris, whom Sherring calls an ethnological puzzle, engage themselves in mercantile and administrative jobs. In Purnea, most of them rent land. In Patna about half of them are goldsmiths.

The Bhats also claim to be Kshatriyas, though they are in fact a caste of genealogists and family bards. In Patna they rank next to the military castes, while in some other places they come immediately after the Kāyasthas.

Next come the Vaisyas, amongst whom are different castes. In the social system, the Agarwals stand at the head of the Bania community in Bihar where they deal in grain, cloth and jewellery and also act as bankers and usurers. A few of them in Bihar are zamindars and landholders, bookkeepers, touts and so on. In Bihar they rank immediately below the Brāhmaṇas and the Kāyasthas. Below the Agarwal come many categories, namely the Maheshwaris, Purawars and Barnwals. The third rank among the Banias of Bihar is held by the Rauniyars, Rastogis, Mahuris and others.

The Kāyasthas are the scribes of India and are not inferior to Brāhmaṇas at most places, in point of rank. Their social status has risen progressively with their wealth and official influence. In Bihar, Kāyasthas have twelve subcastes. They formed professionally the learned aristocracy of India. Even their women can write, some being able to manage their own zamindaris. The qualifications which are the result of their education and their industrious habits are

recognized in various ways. In some districts they monopolize the office of 'patwaris'. In all offices requiring a knowledge of reading and writing, such as secretaries and clerks in the army and in the country, down to the lowest village registrar, Kāyasthas are to be found. A great many of them also live by farming land but only the poorest among them took to ploughing with their own hands and that too, only rarely. A few Kāyasthas are also artisans and make red lead. Some Śrivastavas in Purnea were merchants, chintz printers and tailors.

The Śūdras form the most numerous of the four principal castes of India. Among the pure Śūdras we find numerous artisan castes such as the Halwais, Baruis (cultivators of betel), Malis, Dhanuks, Kandus and Bharbhunjas. Equal in rank to the artisans are a number of pure Śūdra cultivators such as the Koiris, Kurmis, Dhanukas, Amats, and so on. The Koiris are a very large cultivating caste and there is considerable concentration of them in Manbhum. The Dhanukas are the servant class. They are bearers of palanquins and among them are some who cultivate hemp and manufacture ropes.

There are a number of other Śūdras who are considered somewhat low on account of the so-called degraded profession they follow. Among these are the Kahars, who act as palanquin bearers, coolies, porters and agricultural labourers. The Gwalas are the great pastoral caste of India. Their main occupation is the keeping of cattle and the sale of milk and dairy products, though most of them have land as well. Socially the Gwalas rank with Kurmis and others from whom the Brāhmaṇas take water. Then there are the Kumhars, Lohars, Barahis, Hajams, Mallahs, and so on.

Next come the Baldars, Naunias, Tāntis and Telis. These last rank very low, so much so, that the mere sight of them is deemed by some people to bode ill and only degraded Brāhmaṇas perform their ceremonies. Equal in rank are the Kalwars, or distillers of liquors. The Pasi tap palm and date trees, a few make mats and even hunt and sell game.

Lower still is the washerman. In Purnea those Dhobis who took to ploughing regard themselves as superior to the rest.

The Mushahars are found in considerable numbers in South Bihar. They are divided into a number of subcastes and probably had a tribal origin. Their chief occupations are the collecting and sale of medicinal herbs, honey and gum, the rearing of silk-worms and the carrying of palanquins. They had the exclusive monopoly of firing

brick kilns. They do not accept food at the hands of Doms, Dusadhs, Dhobis, Chamars and Mehtars. Nowadays they furnish most of the agricultural labour in South Bihar.

The Dusadhs rank lower still. Very few of them have land of their own. They are largely employed as village watchmen and messengers and some act as grass-cutters, wood-cutters and porters. In Bhagalpur, the occupation of a groom is considered degrading and involves expulsion from the caste. The Dusadhs are also divided into a number of subcastes.

Then come the Untouchables. The Chamars deal with leather and make shoes. Some of them engage in cultivation, chiefly as day labourers. The women act as midwives. They also act as musicians at weddings and other domestic festivals. Some of them are cultivators and landless labourers.

The Doms commonly act as sweepers and scavengers. They also work in bamboo, straw and cane. A number of them acted as public executioners and removed carcases. A few were cultivators and basket-makers while others were musicians. Sub-castes were formed by assigning different occupations to them. The Magahia Doms rank very low indeed as most of them are eaters of carcases and the leavings of others. At certain places they had the exclusive privilege of supplying logs, straw and light for the lighting of funeral pyres. In Mithilā, Dom women welcomed a newcomer with songs while carrying water-pots containing mango leaves on their heads.

Social precedence is an integral part of the caste system. But no fixed hierarchy holds true for all areas and all times, since castes are constantly rising or falling in the social scale.

CASTES AMONG INDIAN MUSLIMS IN BIHAR

The caste system is foreign to Islam and is as contrary to its egalitarian ideals as to the Vedantic doctrines. But it has entered the Muslim social system to a cartain extent as a result of constant contact with Hindus. Muslim castes follow the rule of caste endogamy and they have their caste panchayats. Rules regarding commensality vary. Ashraf, Ajlaf and Arzal were the three main groups under which a number of castes were classified in those days.

GROUPS WHO DO NOT RECOGNIZE CASTE

Vaishṇava, Kabirpanthi, Nanakshahi, Atith (a sect of Saivites) deny the sanctity of caste. They think that all men can worship God

alike. No matter how low a person may be in caste he can become a Vaishṇava. When a person wishes to join one of these sects he goes to a monastery and is ordained by its Mahanth.

CASTE DYNAMICS

The caste system is in no way very rigid regarding vocations. No man is tied down to follow his father's occupation. Custom led, of course, to the following of an occupation in which a man had grown up but it did not mean that he was under any obligation to do so. The ordinary pursuits and occupations of life have now been thrown open to all in India as in England and other countries. Even Buchanan in his travels did not find people adhering to their traditional caste duties. In order to procure a subsistence, many engaged themselves in professions from which they were excluded by long-standing custom. Colebrooke found the reservation of only one profession, that of the Brāhmaṇas, which consists in teaching the Vedas and officiating at religious ceremonies. But he seems to have failed to take note of the fact that Brāhmaṇas did not restrict themselves to teaching the Vedas and officiating at religious ceremonies. Many other castes were also engaged in acting as priests. Considerable latitude then prevailed in other castes as well. There was nothing to prevent an ordinary shopkeeper from rising to be a wealthy merchant, or a rich merchant from sinking to the position of a servant. Even a Mehtar or Chamar, instead of being content with the menial offices to which he was born, could aspire to rise in the police and the army. Many Śūdras were zamindars; some were even Rajas and acted as presidents of 'dharmsabhas' of which Brāhmaṇas were ordinary members. They were not condemned to serve the Brāhmaṇas for ever, and it no longer depended upon caste any more than upon wealth as to who should serve whom. The low-caste Rajas never found even the Brāhmaṇas slow to enter their service. If a Chamar or a sweeper were to acquire considerable wealth, he experienced little difficulty in procuring Brāhmaṇas to serve him as lackeys, cooks or in other menial occupations. The Śūdras were not debarred from learning Sanskrit and Brāhmaṇas themselves sometimes used books bound with calf leather.

In recent years, there has been a considerable modification in caste restrictions. In the towns of Bihar, inter-dining between several castes has become common. The increase of travel by bus and rail has made it difficult to maintain the distances between castes. Losing

caste on being touched by an untouchable is now a thing of the past. Subcaste marriages are now an everyday affair. Intercaste marriage, however, is rare even now.

There has been a distinct and gradual weakening of caste sanctions during the period. Among the higher castes there is now no caste panchayat, because members are widely dispersed. Also there are always ways to evade punishment and caste offences are frequently winked at. The result is that excommunication is no longer dreaded. Among the Śūdras, however, caste panchayats are still powerful.

ADIVASIS

THEIR GENERAL CULTURE AND CONDITIONS

Adivasi (original inhabitant) is a general term for all the scheduled tribes in India. The tribes of Bihar are in different stages of material and moral culture and differ in their social and economic structures. They not only differ considerably from non-tribal populations, but from one another. These differences relate to the means of subsistence, religious and other ideas, social organization and language, but no consistent correlation can be established between any of these features. The environment in which the tribes live, the climate and the flora and the fauna are, broadly speaking, the same, but there are several factors that operate regionally and result not only in a differentiation in economic status between different tribes in adjacent localities, but also within the tribes themselves. This can be seen most clearly if we consider the Kharias. 78,000 of the 88,000, live in the Ranchi district and are known as Dudh and Dhelki Kharias. The rest of them, called the Hill Kharias, live on the inhospitable hill slopes of Manbhum and Dhalbhum. The latter practise shifting cultivation and are cut off, not only from their own tribesmen, but from contact with all other people. The Dudh and Dhelki Kharias also live in low-lying land adjacent to other peoples both tribal and Hindu. They have long been accustomed to settled plough-cultivation and have much in common economically with the Mundas, Oraons and Hindus among whom they live. It would seem that the accident of habitat has occasioned this differentiation of economic conditions among a once homogeneous tribe.

There are in Bihar a few tribes who are still in the hunting and food-gathering stage, though their numbers are inconsiderable. The Uthlu section of the Birhors, some Hill Kharias, the Birjias of

Palamau and a few Saoria Paharias, still derive most of their subsistence from the storing and selling of forest produce. Part of it they consume themselves. Some of these people occasionally grow crops by the 'slash and burn' method of shifting cultivation. The vast majoriy of the tribes, however, practise cultivation in permanent fields and some of them know terracing and irrigation. There are also a good many tribes who work in the mines and factories situated in their area, while many of them work in the tea gardens of Assam and the jute mills of Bengal.

The description of Adivasi culture and conditions given here necessarily applies therefore to those tribal people who are settled agriculturists and who comprise the vast majority of the Adivasi population.

THE TRIBAL VILLAGE

The population of a tribal village usually consists of a majority of tribal people, but most villages also contain families of a few functional castes as Lohars, Ghasi, Mahli, Jolaha, Ahir and so on. There is seldom any great difference in the social and economic status of individual tribal villagers. Among the Mundas, there is still some distinction between descendants of the original settlers and those of later arrivals, but this does not eclipse the democratic character of the social set-up, and feelings of brotherhood link man to man within the village community.

The villages of the various tribes are usually situated near the forest and the villagers use the timber for fuel as well as for house construction. Dudh and Dhelki villages are usually built on the banks of some river or stream.

The typical 'Ho' village is on high ground on a ridge surrounded by undulating country, but the newer villages are generally near the banks of rivers or streams and sometimes on some elevated river terrace. Among the Mundas and Oraons the highest level ground in the neighbourhood is chosen for a village site. All these villages are permanent and contain between forty to a hundred huts. The layout of the villages does not conform to any pattern except among the Santhals who build their houses on both sides of a long straggling street known as a 'Sadarkuli' and the houses are huddled together without any plan. The types of dwellings built by the various tribes correspond with their respective needs and are expressive of their general cultural level. Each house has a kitchen garden attached to it where vegetables are grown. Space is provided for the keeping of cattle and fowls and

pigs about the houses. The kitchen of a Munda house contains the 'Ading' or sacred place where the ancestral spirits of the family reside. The houses in general are built of mud and are roofed with baked tiles.

Most tribal villages have an 'Akhara' or dancing ground, where the inhabitants gather for regular dancing in the evening and during festivals. In Munda, Ho, and Kharia villages, we find outside the village, a bone burial ground called the 'Sasan', where the remains of the descendants of the original settlers of the village are interred after an annual ceremony. Most of the villages also have a place called the 'Sarṇa', the sacred grove where village deities are supposed to reside and where worship is offered by the village priest or Pahan. The 'Youth Dormitory' where young boys spend their evenings and nights, is an important feature of the Oraon villages west of Ranchi. The 'Dhumkuria', as the youth dormitory is called, is a school of social discipline and training, where the youth earns not only his lore but imbibes all the qualities which are calculated to make him a useful member of the community. The boy is sent to the Dhumkuria when he is about 11 or 12 years of age and remains there till his marriage. The Dhumkuria boys act as a corporate body under a monitor, styled as the 'Mahto' and help in the preparations for weddings or other feasts. They thus play an important part in cementing inter-village alliances of friendship. The Oraons also have separate and private dormitories for girls. There is co-operation and reciprocity between the two dormitories, the most important function of which is to train young men and women in singing and dancing. These recreations not only satisfy the Oraon's aesthetic sense and need of entertainment but also help the collective expression of tribal sentiment and its transmission from generation to generation. Dances and songs are believed to bring happiness and prosperity to all, and to stimulate the operations of nature, so as to make the earth fruitful and to bless men and women with abundance of food and fertility. The dormitories help the village elders in their work of training the village youth, for, the boys and girls in them are not only initiated into the mysteries of sex but learn the dignity of labour and to shoulder minor responsibilities. Some of them even receive training in leadership and organization. Among the Mundas, while here and there we find village youths sleeping in a deserted house or in somebody's verandah, such sleeping houses or 'Gitiora' fulfil no other function than that of being secluded resting places.

TRIBAL ECONOMY

Simplicity and self-sufficiency are the twin characteristics of the economic life of a tribal village. There are still villages in remote forest areas which, because of lack of communications have few economic links with the outside world. But most villages maintain certain economic relations with other villages, both tribal and non-tribal. Tribal economy is mostly a matter of subsistence and agriculture is the most important occupation. Sometimes members of the family work on their own plots, at others, villagers are organized into teams. The spirit of co-operation displayed on such occasions by all the families of a village united in one task is reflected in the singing of songs in chorus by the women while they work. The main crops raised on high ground are millets, a variety of pulses and certain types of low-grade rice. But the most important crop of tribal Bihar is paddy, grown on low-lying irrigated fields. The kitchen garden is reserved for the production of maize and vegetables.

The importance of cattle and other livestock in the tribal economy is considerable though animal husbandry is at a low level. Oxen, buffaloes and cows are yoked to the plough as well as to carts. Goats, fish and poultry are used for sacrificial purposes and, together with pigs serve to supplement food.

Hunting among the agricultural tribes has been reduced to a ceremony for, with the disappearance of the thicker forests, not many wild animals are left near the villages. Fishing is engaged in as a pastime by children and in times of scarcity by the adults. The making of mats of different sizes and materials, the plaiting of ropes, the collection of lac and the rearing of silk-worms add to the income of the tribals. Most of the villagers make their ploughs and other wooden articles of daily use, but purchase iron implements from the village blacksmith, and earthen pots and utensils from the local market. Money plays a limited role in tribal economy and while transactions may be large, the cash actually changing hands may be small in amount. The 'hat' plays an important part in tribal economy and every area is served by a number of markets on specified days in the week. The trading is generally done by the women. The markets are places for social gatherings as well and many people attend them for amusement.

Most of the villages of Chotanagpur were cleared for settlement by the tribes themselves and the descendants of the original settlers of a village were for a long time its joint owners. Such settlements

were known as 'Khuntkatti villages'. Under the impact of modern influences, the Khuntkatti tenure has largely broken down. Land is now individually owned by tenants who are responsible for paying rent to Government. The only remaining vestiges of joint ownership are the position of the village headman, known differently among the various tribes, and the village priest, who still enjoys land given him by Khuntkattidars. There are very few absolutely landless tribal families.

FOOD, DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

The main food of the tribal people is boiled rice. For most tribesmen, the months from November to April are months of plenty while the rest of the year is a lean period during which gondli, millet and mahua are eaten. At times, sweet potatoes form the main food. Home-grown pulses of various kinds figure in the diet, as do vegetables such as sag, pumpkin, brinjal and onion. Berries of various kinds and jackfruit also supplement tribal food. Milk is only used to feed the calves. Poultry, sheep, goats and, in certain parts, pigs, are habitually eaten. The tribes prepare home-brewed rice-beer known as Hanria or Illi which is rich in vitamin content. This also has an important role in tribal worship.

The large majority of the tribal peoples are obliged to live on a very spare and varied diet for more than four months in the year.

DRESS

The traditional dress of a tribal young man is a narrow piece of cloth wound round the waist and fastened at the back. A man's ceremonial dress is called Kareya and a woman's Paria. Many of the tribes are known for their cleanliness. Children go about naked till the age of seven or eight. Educated or converted tribesmen keep a dhoti and shirt for going out, while women put on a mill-made sari and printed cotton blouse. Ordinarily the upper part of the body of both men and women is left bare. Only in the presence of strangers do the women cover their breasts. Tribal youths and women are fond of ornaments, and dandies may be seen in the markets laden with necklaces. Women are fond of sticking flowers in their hair and cheap brass and silver ornaments in their ears and noses, round their necks, and on their wrists and feet. They now also wear glass bead necklaces bought from the market. The tribals are known for keeping their heads tidy by combing them regularly with wooden combs which

are sometimes kept stuck in their hair. Tribal women are fond of tatooing and we find their arms and sometimes their foreheads elaborately tatooed. This custom is sometimes associated with magical purposes.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Each tribe (except the Paharias) is divided into a number of exogamous totemic clans. Members of one clan are supposed to be descended from a common ancestor and no sexual relations between two persons belonging to the same clan are tolerated. Most of the villages are now inhabited by members of more than one clan. Members of a clan bear a common surname which is the name of the totem. The primary unit of social organization is the family, consisting of parents and unmarried children. Only in rare cases do we find two or more married brothers living together, while in some cases old and infirm dependents are supported by the family. The descent is patrilineal and ordinarily daughters have no rights in the property of the father, which is divided equally between his sons on his death. Residence is patrilocal and classificatory kinship terminology is used, though a difference is maintained to show the ages as well as the closeness of relationships. We also find specific obligations associated with certain groups of kin in respect of domestic ceremonies such as name-giving, marriage and death.

Each tribe is endogamous and relations between a man and woman belonging to different tribes is unthinkable. A person who has been outcasted for transgressing tribal ethics is not likely to be touched by others. The pollution concept seems to be fully operative among the tribal peoples. Among the Hos, outcastes are known as 'Kajomesin'.

The position of women in tribal Bihar is not as bad as in other patrilineal societies. While they do not possess any right to land, they can own moveable property such as money, goods, cattle and so on. They are in charge of the family purse and are responsible for running the household. The division of labour between men and women makes the women's work in the economic field complementary to that of the men. The women are in complete charge of the house and it is they who bring up the children. They also have important duties to perform on the farm and in the forest. It is generally the woman who goes with the surplus produce of the family to the 'hāt'. All this makes her almost as important as a man. Women may

attend a panchayat if their presence is required in a case, but they are generally not present at certain religious rites. Adult and monogamous marriage is the general rule. Widow remarriage and divorce are allowed though the latter involves a proceeding through the panchayat.

THE COURSE OF LIFE

In the life of an individual there are occasions which mark a transition from one stage to another. Such occasions are birth, marriage and death. During pregnancy a woman has to observe a number of taboos, the infringement of which is thought to lead to certain defects in the child or to a dangerous delivery. The birth of a child is an occasion for great rejoicing on the part of the parents. The house is looked upon as ritually impure for a certain period after childbirth. This varies from tribe to tribe. At the close of the period the 'Chatti' or purification ceremony is performed. The function is marked by feasting and merrymaking. The family is then sufficiently purified for worship to take place. The day following the birth is dedicated to the name-giving ceremony. The child is usually called after an ancestor, dead or living, who becomes his 'Mita', or after the name of the day of the week on which he was born. The ear-boring ceremony takes place when the child is about two years of age. It is this ceremony which entitles the child to enter formally into the tribe. If a child dies before this ceremony, the usual funeral rites are not performed. The early training and discipline of tribal children is taken care of at home by parents. The child imitates what the elders do and so begins to get an idea of the things that are tabooed. He learns to behave in different ways with the members of his family and applies his limited experience to the wider circle of outside kin. To his elders he offers respect, from those younger than himself he expects obedience. Most tribal children have no formal education. As soon as they are able to walk about, they begin to do odd jobs for their elders. Small boys are seen in the field, tending goats and looking after cattle, while boys and girls are seen coming from the forest with a basketful of twigs and leaves to be used as fuel or of cattle dung collected from the nearby fields. As the villagers cannot afford to engage servants for such tasks, many of their children of school-going age grow up without regular schooling. Boys at the age of ten do substantial work in the fields and girls help their brothers to look after younger children and assist their mothers in cooking.

The children play various indoor and outdoor games. School-going children show great interest in football and hockey. At this age, boys and girls form mixed groups and spend their leisure together, but cease to sleep at home. Boys of a particular locality sleep in vacant verandahs, while the girls sleep in groups wherever accommodation is available.

A somewhat peculiar relationship known as ceremonial friendship or blood brotherhood sometimes links two boys or two girls. This is usually between children of similar age and involves an elaborate ceremonial. Such is the strength and sanctity of this link that no marriage can take place between members of the families of two ceremonial friends.

It is during adolescence that boys and girls begin to have regular training in dancing and singing. In most tribal villages, dances take place frequently in the evening in the 'Akhara'. They are initiated into the various kinds of dances and songs befitting different occasions. The dances provide entertainment for grown-up villagers who see to it that the limits of propriety are maintained. Nevertheless, it is on such occasions that friendships are formed between boys and girls. Pre-marital mixing is allowed among the tribals, and young boys and girls meet each other not only on the dancing grounds but in the fields and forest. Very few of these friendships end in marriage, because marriage in the same village, even though the parties belong to different clans, is not regarded with favour.

MARRIAGE

Without marriage no person can become a full member of the tribe. Even the spirits and deities are supposed in most cases to be married. Adult marriage is the rule among the tribals, though where there is Hindu influence, the age of marriage has been lowered. Child marriages are resorted to only by the rich to affect an air of respectability. In choosing a mate, the boy and girl generally have a free hand, but a marriage arranged by the parents is considered ideal. Marriage by capture is now very rare. Raji-khushi marriage is one in which the boy and the girl take the initiative. A bride-price is not insisted on and whatever is given by the bridegroom's family is accepted without a murmur. Sometimes a woman intrudes into the house of a man and insists upon living with him as his wife. This usually takes place when the couple have had an affair and where, for some reason, the man is unwilling to enter into matrimony. Those too poor to be

able to afford a bride-price can only marry if they serve their parents-in-law for a certain period. Widow remarriage and the marriage of a divorced woman is not abnormal. It is called 'Sagai'. The most common form of marriage, however, is the Andi or Diku-Andi, which is a poor imitation of lower-class Hindu marriage. Marriages are arranged through go-betweens. A day is fixed for the payment of the bride-price, which varies among different tribes. Among the Mundas the traditional bride-price is Rs 12 and two head of cattle, while among the Hos, it has risen so high that many girls remain unmarried. On the day fixed for the marriage, a small party, consisting of the boy's male and female relatives, goes to the girl's village, where elaborate ceremonies take place, followed by a good deal of eating and the drinking of rice beer. The girl is then brought to her husband's house where she is ceremonially adopted into the clan of her spouse. Marriage does not cut a girl off completely from her parent's home. Not only does she visit it from time to time, but it is her ultimate refuge in case of a quarrel with her husband leading to divorce, or in case of widowhood.

Marriage creates a network of relations for the husband, as well as for the wife. All his wife's relations become his affinitive relations, They form a person's second line of defence in case of trouble. The woman has to adjust herself to her husband's family. A lack of this adjustment often leads to partition in the family and its break-up.

DAILY LIFE OF MEN AND WOMEN

The day's work for both men and women begins early, especially in the agricultural season. After finishing their daily ablutions the men go to the field with their bullocks and plough. Women clean the previous day's utensils, besmear the house, bring water from the nearest stream or 'dari' or natural spring and cook and take the food to their men in the fields. In the afternoon the men return and rest while the women perform various household tasks. Light agricultural work is usually done in the afternoon and all take their food at nightfall. Thereafter, the men spend their time either in gossip or in witnessing or participating in dances on the 'Akhara'.

OLD AGE AND DEATH

The position of the elders in tribal life is very high. They are considered

repositories of tribal tradition and experience. In all village affairs their voice is important, especially in the panchayat. But people who are so old as to be senile have no status at all. Neglected by their sons, they eke out a miserable existence toiling with their failing limbs. Even so, the old spend most of their time looking after their grandchildren and derive great happiness from doing so. Ambivalence between grandparents and grandchildren on the one hand, and the intermediate generation on the other, makes relations between the two very close indeed. Old men and women feel themselves out of tune with changing society and generally comment adversely on the ways of youth. It is only on occasions of festivals that they throw away all reserve and indulge freely in dances, enjoyment and merry-making.

Old people naturally suffer from various ailments. At times herbal medicines are given, but tribal folk mostly attribute diseases to witch-craft and the 'Ojha' or 'Mati' is called in to diagnose and prescribe the necessary remedy. At death the body of a man of means is burnt. The poor are buried. Death pollutes the entire family, a state which only ends after a purification ceremony. An important ritual consists in calling back the 'shade of the dead' man to reside in the 'Ading' with other ancestral spirits. Among the Munda, Oraon, Kharia and Ho tribes, the bone-burial ceremony is held every year. At that time, the relics of those who might have died during the year are interred in their clan Sasan.

RELIGION AND FESTIVALS

All the tribes of Bihar, with the exception of the Paharias, believe in one Supreme Being who is the creator of the entire universe. This God is an all-pervasive and benevolent power. All minor gods and spirits owe allegiance to Him. But He is so high, so aloof from the human sphere of action that regular worship is not offered to Him, nor is there any image or symbol that stands for Him. This God is known as Sing Bonga among the Mundas, Birhors and Hos; as 'Ponomosor' (Parameśwar) or 'Bhagwan' among the Kharias; as 'Dharmes' among the Oraons, and as 'Chando' or 'Thakur' among the Santhals.

Below Him come the village deities who are worshipped in the Sarna by the priest on the occasion of different festivals. Some of these deities are benevolent, others malevolent. Disease-deities are propitiated only when an epidemic breaks out. A number of such

deities, and their names which vary from tribe to tribe, must be kept in good humour for the prosperity of the village and its inhabitants. Besides this, there are the spirits which reside in mountains, rivers, forests and trees. All these, as well as the deities of the second category, are repositories of Bonga, which is an impersonal power like Mana, at once sacred and powerful. In some tribal villages we also find the worship of Mahadan, Kali and others.

Tribal folk believe in many malevolent spirits, which, in case of illness, have to be appeased by the Ojha (special priest) or the Mati. Ordinary priests cannot deal with them. Ancestral spirits also figure in tribal worship. After a death, the shade is ceremonially conducted to the secret tabernacle which is the home of ancestral spirits in a corner of the kitchen. On specific occasions worship is offered to the ancestral spirits. Totemistic objects such as animals and plants are objects of reverence for particular clans, but no worship is offered them, nor are there any totemistic ceremonies. A tribesman, however, will not do anything against his totem.

Worship entails the chanting of certain formulae by the officiating priest and the sacrifice of fowls, goats, or sheep in the name of the deity. The offering is transformed into a sacrament which is partaken of by the entire community. Bigger animals, such as cattle, are not generally sacrificed to deities.

The religious enthusiasm of tribal people is expressed in the number of festivals which mark different stages of the agricultural calendar. The most important of these are Sarhul, Naukhi, Parab, Karma, Tusu, Sohrai and so on. Sarhul, observed on the last day of the month of Baisakh, is one of the most popular festivals in Chotanagpur. The festival is so widely prevalent in South Bihar that it has been declared a public holiday. It is the spring festival of the aboriginals. On this occasion, village priests offer flowers and sacrifices such as cocks, goats or sheep in the Sarna. It is an occasion of great rejoicing and festivity. Men and women dance all night to the accompaniment of music. The Naukhia Parab is held on the last day of the month of Asarh, when the first fruits of the new crop are offered to the presiding deity of the village. The cultivators abstain from work on that day.

The Karma festival is observed by both aboriginals and non-aboriginals. In the month of Bhado, a branch of the Sal tree is planted in the Akhara and offerings are made to it. This is preceded by twenty-four hours' fasting and the night is spent in dancing and singing round the branch planted in the Akhara. The long legend of

Karma and Dharma is narrated by singers. The day following Diwali, the Sohrai festival is celebrated. This is an occasion for the worship of domestic animals which are cleaned and decorated. In the areas of close contact with Hindus, the Adivasis celebrate the festivals of Holi and Dussehra with great enthusiasm and fairs are held at those times. Among the Hos, the Mage Parab, which lasts for several days is an occasion for great festivity and enjoyment. In the Munda areas, just after the harvest in December and January a number of fairs known as Buru, are held at various places. They take the form of very big bazars where business is combined with entertainment.

Among the Santhals, Sohrai is celebrated after the paddy harvest in December-January. The festival lasts for five days and the gods who preside over cattle-sheds, as well as the ancestral spirits are worshipped.

It is alleged that during the Sohrai and the Mage Parab the Santhals and the Hos, 'indulge in a veritable saturnalia, giving themselves up to dancing, eating, drinking, singing and sexual licence.' While it is true that in these festivals the tribal folk indulge in full and free enjoyment, the picture of licentiousness and debauchery drawn by foreign authors is very much exaggerated.

SOCIAL CONTROL

The tribes of Bihar employ various devices to maintain the social equilibrium. From early youth, the tribal boy listens to myths and folklore and learns to distinguish between right and wrong. If he does not conform to his social environment and breaks the tribal laws or offends against customs and traditions, his behaviour invokes sanctions which operate to his disadvantage. These are of many kinds, varying in nature and degree with the wrong they seek to right. The breach of certain taboos brings in its wake automatic supernatural punishment. In the villages, public opinion is a great force for social conformity. Neglect of family duties and obligations, desertion of dependents, refusal to entertain guests, repudiation of debt, adultery, theft and sorcery, evoke strong social disapproval. Sometimes this is so powerful that it takes the form of social ostracism and the offender may, in extreme cases, resort to suicide.

The most important social offences which come within the purview of tribal panchayats is the breach of the laws of clan exogamy and sexual relations with a person who belongs to another tribe. Cases of divorce, adultery, assault, injury and deliberate destruction of

property, are dealt with by the village panchayat. Partitions of family property and disputes about succession and cases of suspected witchcraft are also brought before it.

Theoretically, the panchayat includes all the adult males of the village, but, in practice it consists of the village elders and officers such as the headman, the priest, the Bhandari or Gorait, as well as other men of influence. The complainant and the defendant appear before it and make statements on oath. A man swearing on oath takes a small quantity of paddy, a little cow-dung and a clod of earth and places these on his head. A person making a false statement is believed to lose crops, cattle and land. In former times, trial by ordeal was resorted to. Witnesses are called to testify to the statements of both parties and judgement is delivered by the head of the panchayat. The judgement reflects the considered opinion of the panchayat, has tremendous force and no one dares to disobey it. The punishment which the panchayats usually impose are fines and excommunication. For petty theft, the culprit is fined and beaten. A man refusing to pay the fine imposed by the panchayat is boycotted by the whole village. Temporary excommunication may also be decreed.

Among the Santhals, the most extreme form of social punishment is called Bitlaha. This is pronounced for such serious crimes as family or clan incest, or sexual relations with non-Santhals. When the panchayat of the village decides on Bitlaha, news is sent round the neighbourhood and on the appointed day people gather in their hundreds and thousands. The crowd then proceeds to the offender's house singing obscene songs ridiculing the guilty party. Later on, the house of the culprit is desecrated by the crowd. Sometimes, violence is resorted to by the mob. Bitlaha follows the sentence of formal excommunication by the panchayat. It is a social expression of the extreme disapproval of the community as a whole.

In tribal Bihar, there were in the past, groups of villages united under a Parha. This institution was most elaborate among the Oraons and Mundas. Each Parha Panch had a number of officers modelled on the court of the Chotanagpur Rajas. The offices in the Parha Panch, were held by village headmen elected for the purpose. All offices of Raja, Diwan, Kotwal, Pandey, Lal Sipahi and so on, were hereditary. The Parha Panchayat was a court of appeal from the judgements of the village panchayat. Cases dealing with excommunication were generally referred to this panchayat. The meeting of the Parha took place in the village in which the dispute occurred and on a

specified date representatives of different villages gathered there. The procedure of the panchayat is more elaborate than that of the village panchayat and its verdict is universally respected. Members of the Parha Panch are feasted by the people of the village in which the meeting is held and also from the proceeds of the fine realized either in cash or kind from the guilty party. Another important work of the Parha Panch is readmitting persons outcasted earlier, if they are prepared to mend their ways and pay the requisite fine. The first person to take food at the hands of the newly readmitted tribesman is the Kartaha. Restoration to the old status, however, is not complete and the stigma lingers. Among the Hos, such readmitted outcastes form a separate endogamous social group known as Kajomesin.

The Parha system is now not very active except in a few areas under new-found inspiration from converted tribesmen. From such areas, few cases go out to the Government-sponsored gram-kachharies or to the courts.

CULTURAL CHANGES

Adivasi culture is fast changing under the impact of external influences. With the development of communications, new ideas, new artifacts, machinery and so on, are finding their way to the remotest corners of the Adivasi area. Landholders from outside, contact with courts, moneylenders and petty officers of the State Government, have opened a new vista. Christian missionaries not only tried to take Christ's gospel to the villages but also western culture and technology. The spread of education, tribals returning from the Assam tea gardens, the Bengal jute mills and the coal mines and steel factories, have accelerated the process of change.

There is no aspect of life that is not touched by this change. The social solidarity of the village has been practically broken. Formerly, emphasis was on co-operation, but the younger generation is more individualistic and the authority of the village elders is not as strongly felt as before. Respect for age, tradition and the ancient mores and customs is gradually vanishing. The dances in the 'Akhara' have become less popular. The same is true of the youth dormitory. Christianity in tribal villages has too often brought not peace but a sword, dividing father against son and the household against itself. The influx of money into the villages with the establishment of military camps in the heart of the tribal areas during the war, the construction of D.V.C. projects and other such works, have resulted in the shift

of influence and authority from the hereditary social functionaries to the 'new rich'. With money also came modern evils such as drunkenness, debauchery and venereal diseases. The first psychological reaction to these changes was one of frustration. The tribal peoples lost faith in their own values and drifted either to the Christian or the Hindu folds, though the latter alternative was a slow process which involved no sudden break with the traditional mode of life. The 'Birsa movement' was originally the result of such conditions. So also was the 'Tana Bhagat' movement among the Oraons.

The wider dissemination of education and cultural contacts with others led to the second psychological phase viz. the rediscovery of their own culture. This was marked by the reawakening of pride in certain aspects of tribal culture. Some of the tribal dances and institutions have received a new appraisal. The dances have been keenly appreciated by critics and have won prizes in All-India competitions. The Oraon dancing has made a special mark. The 'Dhumkuria' as a place of formal education is being popularized by tribal leaders. The 'Parha' organization is also being revived. Advanced sections of the tribal community had taken part in the fight for freedom. Now that freedom has been attained, they have become conscious of their rights and have begun to demand active participation in the administration and the end of exploitation.

The material aspect of the lives of the Adivasis has undergone great changes. The leafy booth and wicker walls have given place to many substantial houses. In most homes, we now find beds and country-made chairs, as also one or two cups and saucers, and modern umbrellas. Lanterns have replaced indigenous oil lamps. Women prefer sparkling ornaments and mill-made jumpers. In the industrialized areas soap, hair oil, cosmetics and kumkum have found their way into the houses of rich and poor alike. Shoes are now common and instead of the traditional dress, shirts and shorts are becoming popular.

The problems of the Adivasis are many and the State Government is trying to tackle these directly through its own officers, or indirectly through liberal grants to non-official welfare organizations. More and more schools and hostels are being opened and communications are being improved. Dispensaries and medical aid are also being made available. Hundreds of minor and medium irrigation schemes have been started and to provide increased credit facilities, hundreds of grain golas have been opened, where grain is given on loan to the

agriculturists to be returned at the next harvest with interest lower than that charged by others. Those tribes who live in the hills are being induced to come down through liberal grants of land, bullocks and other agricultural implements, and afforestation is being carried out in order to wean them from the wasteful of a shifting cultivation system. 'Paharia' and 'Kharia' resettlement schemes are in progress. The opening of Community Projects and N.E.S. Blocks has opened up a new horizon for the tribal peoples, and crafts and cottage industries have been started to give them a supplementary source of income.

The study of tribal cultures, conditions and problems, shows that although there are distinct peculiarities, the economic and allied aspects for both, tribal and non-tribal people are the same in the same area. Tribal culture does not seem to be quite foreign, but its distinctive features and colourfulness add to the mosaic pattern of Bihar's life and activities. A Tribal Research Institute located at Ranchi is now studying the special problems of tribes in the perspective of the welfare activities of the Government.

C. EDUCATION, SCIENCE, LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN BIHAR

Before tracing the development of the modern system of education in Bihar, we may briefly review here the state of indigenous education. The closing years of the eighteenth century and the earlier decades of the nineteenth form a transitional period in our history because of the impact of various new forces in different spheres of life.

HIGHER EDUCATION BEFORE THE NEW SYSTEM

The old university education in well-organized institutions had disappeared and the State as such, had not established any system of education under its control. Education depended upon the patronage of individual members of the ruling classes and the aristocracy, and the initiative of persons of pious and benevolent disposition. Buchanan refers thus to the ruler of Darbhanga in this respect: 'The Darbhanga Raja, being himself a Brahmin of very high birth, pays some attention to the education of the Pandits in his estates.' 'Education,' wrote Dr F. W. Thomas in 1891, 'was no exotic in India. There is no country where the love of learning had so early an origin and has exercised so lasting and powerful an influence. From the simple poets of the Vedic age to the Bengali philosopher of the present

day, there is an uninterrupted succession of teachers and scholars.'

Till the early 19th century, there were two types of institutions for education: (*i*) those for higher education through the medium of Sanskrit or Persian and Arabic, and (*ii*) those for elementary education. There was specialization in Sanskrit studies at different institutions which provided for teaching separate subjects, e.g., Nyaya. poetry, grammar, astronomy and so on. Buchanan mentions twenty-five Sanskrit teachers of repute in the district of Purnea. In the district of Bihar and Patna, he heard of thirty-six teachers of high calibre who were proficient in grammar, law and metaphysics, from the pandit who assisted him in his survey, and of twenty-five Sanskrit teachers in the district of Shahabad. From a similar source he knew that in the Bhagalpur district, the number of such teachers in his time was fourteen. He notes that in Tirhut, 'there were many teachers of very high celebrity.' Besides such teachers of the higher branches of Sanskrit learning, such as literature, law, philosophy and metaphysics, there were many pandits who engaged themselves in teaching other subjects, such as medicine, astrology, and so on.

At the time when Adam conducted his survey, there were twenty-seven Sanskrit schools and teachers in the districts of South Bihar, with 437 students. The subjects studied were grammar, lexicology, literature, the Vedanta, Mimāṁsā, Sāṁkhya, medicine, logic, law, rhetoric, mythology, astrology and Tantra. Two of the teachers, Chakrapani Pandit and Hara Lal Pandit, were known as authors. In the district of Tirhut, there were then fifty-six Sanskrit schools with the same number of teachers and 244 students.

There are some people who consider Sanskrit education to have been of little importance from the practical point of view. But its academic and humanistic value can hardly be questioned. Sanskrit learning has made a great appeal even to some contemporary Europeans. Adam observed in one of his Reports: 'So long as the (Sanskrit) language shall exist, the literature it contains will constitute one of the most precious remains of antiquity connecting itself by links clearly perceptible, but not yet fully traced, with the history of almost every people of Western Asia and of Europe. So long as the Hindus shall exist as a distinct people, they will derive some of their most inspiring associations and impulses from the great literary monuments which belong to their race. The progress of time will render them more venerable, even when from the progress of improvement, they may cease to be regarded as sacred.'

Education in Persian was widely prevalent. For the Muhammadans, this was the most important medium of higher education. As the official language, its knowledge had become a matter of practical necessity for the Hindus and many of them mastered it. Buchanan writes that the schools for Persian education were 'nearly as much frequented by Hindus as by Muhammadans, for, the Persian language is considered as a necessary accomplishment for every gentleman. It is absolutely necessary for those who wish to acquire fortune in the courts of law.' Azimabad (Patna) was a very important centre of Persian education in those days. The mid-eighteenth century Bihar historian Ghulam Husain, author of the famous work *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin* observes: 'There were in these times at Azimabad a number of persons who loved science and learning and employed themselves in teaching and in being taught. I remember to have seen in the city and its environs nine or ten professors of repute and three or four hundred students and disciples. From this we may have an idea of the number of those that must have been in the great towns or the retired (inland) districts.' At this time a number of scholars, well-versed in Persian, came from Iran to India and settled particularly in Bihar and Patna. In the Bihar and Patna districts, Buchanan heard of several Maulavis who instructed students in Persian literature and Arabic and in the Shahabad district he heard of three such teachers. In Adam's time there were in the districts of South Bihar, 291 schools, of which 279 were Persian and twelve Arabic, the number of teachers being the same as the number of schools and the number of scholars 1,486 (1,424 Persian and 62 Arabic scholars). Of the Persian scholars, 865 were Hindus and of the Arabic scholars, two were Hindus of the Kayastha caste. The district of Tirhut had 234 schools, of which 238 were Persian and four Arabic. In each of these districts, one of the Persian teachers was a Hindu and the rest Mussalmans. In the district of Tirhut, there were 569 Persian and 29 Arabic scholars. Of the Persian scholars, 126 were Mussalmans and 443 Hindus.

There was no connexion between the Sanskrit and elementary Hindi schools. But this was not the case with the higher Persian and Arabic schools, which were linked with elementary education.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION BEFORE THE NEW SYSTEM

Institutions for elementary education, distinct from the Sanskrit schools were widespread in the urban and rural areas and, some kind of

primary education was encouraged in every stratum of society. According to Adam, there were 100,000 indigenous elementary schools in Bengal and Bihar in 1835. Assuming, as Adam did, the population of those two provinces to have been 40,000,000, there would be a village school for every 400 persons. In the eighteen subdivisons of the district of Purnea, Buchanan found 643 elementary schools among the Hindu population, which he 'considered very inadequate to the demand,' and a large proportion of the people of the district were taught to read and write by their parents. In Adam's time, the nine thanas of the district of South Bihar contained in all 285 Hindi schools. One of the teachers was a Mussalman and the rest Hindus. Of the Hindu teachers, there were 278 Kayasthas, two Magadhas, 1 Gandhabanik, one Teli, one Koiri, and one Sonar. Of the students, 172 were Mussalmans, and 2,918 were Hindus. The Hindu students belonged to different high and low castes. This was the pattern in almost all the schools of this type.

It is interesting to note that the institutions for primary education maintained teachers and students irrespective of caste or creed. Though in Bihar the Primary School teachers were mainly recruited from the Kayastha caste, there were a few belonging to other castes; even a Mussalman was a teacher in a Hindi school and Mussalman students read in Hindi schools.

The schools for higher learning as well as for primary education were accommodated mostly in thatched houses built by the teachers themselves on land donated by local persons of repute and wealth. At some places, there were no school buildings at all, and these classes were held in the outer parts or gardens of other peoples' houses.

The remuneration of the 'humble but valuable class of village schoolmasters' was not at all attractive. According to Adam, the average monthly professional income of such teachers in Bengal and Bihar was about three rupees. This was supplemented to some extent by presents of foodstuffs, clothes, and so on during annual festivals or other ceremonies, and a gratifying feature was that the teachers enjoyed high social prestige.

ENGLISH EDUCATION

The introduction of English education and the development of the modern educational system in its different branches followed the change in circumstances. British supremacy extended all over the country and an administrative structure suited to it, came into being.

The impact of the new ideas of the West began to be felt; and the influence of enlightened Indians such as Ram Mohan Roy, worked in favour of English education. There were individual efforts for the introduction of English education in India by Christian missionaries during the last two decades of the eighteenth century but the Company's Government did not at first interfere in Indian social and educational matters and followed a policy of *laissez-faire*. However, at the time of the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1813, the English Parliament asked the Company to take steps for the introduction of useful knowledge and religious and moral improvement. It further directed that 'a sum of not less than a lakh of rupees should be set apart each year, and spent for the revival and improvement of literature, encouragement of learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India.' Nothing important followed immediately. For some years there was keen controversy between the 'Orientalists' and 'Anglicists' as to the nature of the education to be given. The latter advocated a liberal education on western lines through the medium of English. This view ultimately prevailed on account of its strong advocacy by Macaulay, who came to India in 1834 as the new Law Member. He was appointed President of the Committee of Public Instruction. Backed by his opinion which is embodied in his minute of 2 February 1835, the Government of Lord William Bentinck passed the famous Resolution of 7 March 1835, which declared that 'all funds appropriated for purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone.'

Institutions for this kind of education began to spring up at different places. According to Adam, one school for English education had already been started at Purnea early in 1835. In Bihar, two educational circles were started, one in Bihar and the other at Bhagalpur. Soon Zila schools were established at Patna (the first English schools Bihar established under Government auspices), at Arrah, Chapra, and the Hill School at Bhagalpur. Another school, called the Bhagalpur Institution was also started at that place. In 1863, Zila schools were sanctioned for Deoghar, Motihari, Hazaribagh, and Chaibasa. Gradually, aided and private schools were started at other places and these functioned in varying circumstances.

The year 1854 is another important landmark in the history of education in modern India. The famous despatch of Sir Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control, dated 19 July 1854,

laid the foundation on which the educational system has developed till recent times. The new scheme aimed at the creation of a co-ordinated system of education from the highest to the lowest stage with primary schools, high schools and colleges; study in each leading to the next higher step. To give effect to these, a Department of Education was to be created in each province. Emphasis was laid on the need for mass education, the improvement of vernacular education, and the training of teachers. It also definitely recommended that the vernaculars should be the medium of instruction.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

The most important recommendation was for the establishment of a university in each presidency town. Thus the first university in India, that of Calcutta, was started in January 1857; that of Bombay came into existence in July 1857 and of Madras in September 1857.

In Bihar, 9 January 1863, is a memorable day, for Patna College was established on that date. As the oldest and best institution for higher university education in Bihar, Patna College has played a highly significant role in her modern history and new Bihar has been to a very large extent the creation of its accomplished alumni.

The history of Patna College as an institution with traditions about a century old may be reviewed very briefly under certain well-marked periods. In the first, that is till 1882, when the state of education in India was reviewed by the Hunter Commission, it progressed slowly but steadily. The numerical strength of the College rose from five on 31 March 1863, to 162 in 1881. Thus prejudice against higher English education was gradually disappearing and the public in Bihar had begun to appreciate it. In 1868, the first batch of Patna College students took their degrees.

The period from 1882 to 1902 may be characterized as the period of slow expansion. During this time the number of students rose from 162 on 31 March 1881 to 205 on 31 March 1900, though there were fluctuations in the figures in different years. Additions were made to the buildings and improvements were effected in other ways.

The administration of Lord Curzon was a turning-point in the history of India for many reasons. In the sphere of education new changes were introduced by the Indian Universities Act of 1904. Though calculated to introduce a 'comprehensive scheme of officialization' and to tighten Government control over the educational

institutions of India, this Act recognized the higher functions of universities and colleges regarding the instruction of students, the employment of professors and lecturers, the equipment of laboratories and museums and the development of a corporate life among the students. The regulations of the Calcutta University were modified in 1906 and an ideal college was to be 'a self-contained college, which offers its members a complete and many-sided life, intellectual, social and physical.' The Committee appointed by Calcutta University in 1905 to inspect the Calcutta colleges reported that the minimum conditions for achieving this ideal were; '(*a*) adequate staff, (*b*) adequate buildings, rooms, equipment, apparatus, a large hall for general assembly, (*c*) a respectable reference library and provision for a steady supply of new books, large reading room and (*d*) well-equipped laboratories and hostels and playing-fields.'

Under the guidance of distinguished Principals there was an all-round development of Patna College in the first decade of the twentieth century. It was then considered to be 'next to the Presidency College, the most important Government College in Bengal.' Extensive improvements were effected in the buildings and accommodation. The construction of the Minto Hindu Hostel was completed in 1908, and soon another, the Muhammadan (now the Jackson), Hostel was constructed. The old opium godown was converted into a gymnasium and quarters for the Principal and the seniormost professor were completed by 1909.

This staff was strengthened. It then included some eminent Indian professors such as Pandit Ramavatar Śarma and Professors Jadunath Sarkar and D. N. Mallik. The Library began to be reorganized. In 1906 it contained 5,125 books, now the number is about 45,000. The number of students steadily increased. Physical education was encouraged and from July 1906 the system of compulsory games, drill and gymnastics was introduced. This college came to have a Students' Common Room, and the College Magazine was started in March 1907 under the editorship of Professor Jadunath Sarkar. In January 1907, the Archæological Society was founded with Pandit Ramavatar Śarma as its first President. A College Dramatic Society came into being at that time, and the College Old Boys' Association was organized in March 1909.

During this period, some connected institutions were separated from the parent institution, the Patna College. The Government Law College was started in July 1909. The Bihar School of Engineering

became an entirely separate institution in 1909 and it was raised to the status of a college in July 1924.

During the next period till 1927, various improvements were made in the College. There were additions to the staff, more buildings and better equipment and furniture were provided. The number of students increased by March 1927 to 488, including 151 post-graduates.

With the establishment of the Patna University in October 1917, after the creation of the separate Province of Bihar and Orissa, a new chapter was opened in the history of higher education in Bihar. Post-graduate classes in various arts subjects were started at Patna College in July 1919 and those in Physics and Chemistry in 1921. The Science College was established as a separate institution for higher scientific teaching in 1927.

The years since 1927 have been marked by important improvements in Patna College in all respects and now it is one of the most efficient centres for higher studies in arts subjects in India. New departments, such as those of Geography, Psychology and Political Science have been started. Girl students in growing numbers have been admitted into the undergraduate and post-graduate classes. Social and corporate activities have been immensely enlarged and games, sports and other extra-curricular activities have received attention. Referring to the Patna and Science Colleges, the Radhakrishnan Commission expressed the view that these have to be University Colleges in the true sense of the term and should serve as the nucleii of the post-graduate work of the University.

Since 1952, Patna University has been transformed into a purely teaching and residential University with a limited territorial jurisdiction over an area of about ten miles, in the hope that it will foster research and original studies of the highest creative value. Bihar University came into being at the same time with jurisdiction over the other parts of Bihar. There has been much expansion in the Bihar University with the establishment of many new colleges. In due course, the quality of higher education is bound to go up. Qualitative education is an indispensible requisite for the true advancement of knowledge.

It is not possible here to refer to other institutions of higher education in the State. Suffice it to say that since the last decade of the nineteenth century, colleges have sprung up and prospered steadily in almost all parts of Bihar. Professional colleges, such as those of law, medicine, engineering and commerce have been added. There has

been a steady increase in the demand for higher education all over the state.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

We may now review secondary education, that is below collegiate and above primary education. When the British began to build up their political supremacy in Bengal and Bihar they found there a widespread system of elementary and higher education. The Despatch of 1854 recommended 'active measures' for conveying 'useful and practical knowledge' to the 'great mass of the people'. Just before the outbreak of the movement of 1857-9, Mr Tayler, Commissioner of the Patna Division, recommended certain measures for the spread of vernacular education under Government control with the co-operation of the landholders and by establishing normal schools at all the Sadar stations for the training of teachers. Mr Tayler also arranged for the publication of a weekly Urdu newspaper called the *Akhbar-i-Bihar*, 'as a most useful and important channel of instruction'.

In 1873 the Government appointed in each district a Committee of Public Instruction consisting of six executive and educational officers with the Commissioner of the Division as President and the Magistrate-Collector as Secretary. The Committee was to advise the Magistrate on all matters relating to education.

In 1875 Sir Richard Temple (Lt.-Governor of Bengal 1874-7) sought to give an impetus to primary education, and he thought that 'local management of primary schools, by district authorities was essential to their success.' After the passing of the Local Self-Government Act of 1885 and the formation of the District Boards, management of all Government middle and primary schools was transferred to their control. Gradually private enterprise also made much progress in the field of secondary education and it was encouraged by Government.

From the creation of the Province of Bihar and Orissa till 1937, the increase in the number of secondary schools and pupils in that state was as follows:—

High Schools	1911-12	1916-17	1921-2	1926-7	1931-2	1936-7
Number of Schools	79	85	102	117	147	196
Number of Pupils	21,271	30,057	21,546	34,108	42,843	57,043
Middle English Schools						
Number of Schools	144	165	197	246	497	637
Number of Pupils	12,875	17,837	15,063	28,310	55,628	83,009
Middle Vernacular Schools						
Number of Schools	100	104	136	232	119	103
Number of Pupils	7,578	10,125	10,219	24,412	12,693	12,619

PRIMARY EDUCATION

In the sphere of primary education there were in 1876 in the Patna Division 2,149 schools with 51,348 pupils. Government thought that 'on the whole the progress in primary education is well marked.' Mr Croft reported that the new pathshala system had penetrated to the middle classes of different castes, but the lowest castes such as the Kahars, Dosadhs, Chamars and others had 'only been partially reached.' Mussalman pupils were only eleven per cent of the total number. In the Bhagalpur Division such schools in that year were 948 in number with 23,019 pupils. With regard to the Santhal Parganas, what Mr Croft wrote is typical of the Government's approach towards the education of Adivasis: 'The progress of education among the Santhals is a question that has lately attained some prominence. In the Santhal Parganas, the Santhals, Paharias, and other similar races number 42 per cent of the population: in our schools they number 35 per cent. But, as might be expected, no Santhals are to be found in the middle or higher schools of the district; consequently in lower schools including the normal boarding schools, the proportion rises to 38 per cent. But of the whole number of Santhals, 62 per cent, or 1,269, are in mission schools; in ordinary pathshalas the proportion of Santhals is only 21 per cent of the total number of pupils. Consequently, if it be really intended to promote education among Santhals, and to wean them, so far as elementary education can do so, from the vice of drunkenness, I know no better way of effecting that object than to largely augment the grants now made to the Church Missionary Society and the Indian Home Mission to their boarding schools especially. The object of these schools is to train a number of young people, whether Christian converts or not, to act as pioneers of civilization and order in their own villages; and their peculiar merit is that they train young women as well as young men; so that numbers of Santhal children in the coming generation will

be surrounded from their birth by humanizing influences. These future mothers of families are cheaper and better instruments of civilization than any schoolmasters that we can send abroad into the Santhal villages. During the past year the Church Missionary Society has had to close 14 pathshalas for want of funds.' In fact, in the succeeding decades, numerous missionary schools did spring up in the Santhal Parganas and Chotanagpur.

After the creation of the Province of Bihar and Orissa, in 1912-13 the number of schools was 23,940 with 6,74,286 pupils, but in 1925-6 the schools numbered 30,656 with 9,30,394 pupils. In the period from 1 April 1932, to 31 March 1937, the number of primary schools for Indian boys fell from 19,754 to 18,759, though that of their pupils rose from 654,747 to 701,090. Next year, the number of such schools rose to 18,782 and pupils to 742,440. Free and compulsory education was started at some places. Two notable experiments in 1937-8 were the inauguration of the Mass Literacy Movement and the starting of the Basic Training School at Patna to train the future Basic-system teachers. The Mass Literacy Movement lost its momentum in a few years, but the Basic system has been making headway under encouragement from the Government and a rural university is in the making at Turki in the Muzaffarpur district. Special arrangements have been made and facilities provided during recent years for the education of Adivasis, Harijans and backward communities.

Several commissions, conferences and committees, have reviewed the state of secondary and primary education and have made various recommendations, some of which have been implemented. But fundamental defects such as wastage, stagnation, low standards and the deplorable condition of teachèrs, cannot be said to have been completely eliminated. The colossal illiteracy of our masses continues to be a staggering problem for this State as for other parts of India. Its liquidation is a charge on our democracy and it is sought to be accelerated by implementing the programmes of the Second Five-Year Plan.

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Bihar has had to her credit for several years past the following important cultural institutions: the Bihar Research Society, the Shreemati Radhika Sinha Institute, the Sinha Library and the Khudabaksh Oriental Public Library. From its creation in 1915, the Bihar and

Orissa Research Society, now called the Bihar Research Society, has promoted the cause of higher studies and research in various ways and its journal has deservedly enjoyed an international reputation for its learned publications. The Radhika Sinha Institute is unique in two respects. Established by Dr Sachchidanand Sinha in memory of his wife, Shreemati Radhika Devi, it stands as a visible symbol of his deep affection. The Sinha Library, having as its nucleus the extensive private collection of the late Dr Sinha, is a noble and inspiring monument of his unflinching zeal for scholarly pursuits. The Khudabaksh Oriental Public Library is a veritable repository of the manifold branches of eastern lore in Arabic and Persian, containing highly valuable material for oriental studies relating to Moslem and Indo-Moslem history and culture. Patna can also be justly proud of a rich Museum, a magnificent building containing many important antiques, belonging mostly to the ancient and medieval periods. Mauryan and pre-Mauryan terracottas and polished sculpture are specially well represented.

FEMALE EDUCATION

The uplift of women is one of the most significant achievements of renascent India, and this has been facilitated by the gradual spread of their education on modern lines. Indeed, India has had a brilliant tradition of cultured womanhood from the days of remote antiquity. The writer of the article on 'Native Female Education' in the *Calcutta Review* of 1855 rightly noted that the 'practices of close seclusion and of non-education are an innovation on the proper Hindu system.' The Auxiliary Committee on the Indian Statutory Commission gave it as their opinion that 'there is nothing inherent either in the Hindu or in the Muslim religion which militates against the education of women. In fact there were even in early days many examples of women possessing wide knowledge, particularly of sacred and classical lore.'

This tradition survived till the early nineteenth century, though, because of various circumstances female education had then sunk to a very low level.

For ladies of respectable family the study of classical and vernacular literature was a pious pursuit and recreation. Secular considerations, chiefly the management of property, prompted some members of the aristocracy, to educate their daughters privately. There were then no separate public educational institutions for girls. Buchanan

refers to ladies in the district of Shahabad at the time of his survey, who could read and write letters and understand accounts. In the Purnea district there were 483 women who understood common poetry. In the area to the west of the Kosi river about twenty women were able to correspond in devabhāsā, the language of the gods, Hindi.

The beginning and growth of female education on modern lines are to be attributed to the activities of Christian missionaries, the influence of the 19th century Indian renaissance, the efforts of enlightened Indians, the impetus supplied by the national movement and the measures adopted by the State. We shall try to review this subject in brief from, roughly, the post-1858 period, as material for the preceding years is not available yet.

The Despatch of 1854 observed: 'The importance of female education in India cannot be overrated; and we have observed with pleasure the evidence which is now afforded of an increased desire on the part of many of the natives to give a good education to their daughters.' In Bihar such an opinion about the 'public instruction' of girls was yet to grow. But arrangements of other kinds were prevalent. Mr Croft wrote in 1875-6: 'The genuine desire (or reluctance) of the people about education of girls is shown by the number at school in boys' pathshalas, about a dozen in every district, except Patna and Champaran. In Patna, however, there is some female education which does not appear on the returns. A tailor at Dinapore teaches 10 Mussulman girls as he sits at work. At Lai, near the Bihta railway station, an old woman teaches 30 or 40 girls Hindi. The people of that part are the most advanced in the district, and the Deputy and Sub-Inspector are convinced that 30 per cent of the women of the Kayastha, Rājput, Brāhmaṇa, and Baniya castes have some education; a few even read the *Ramayana*. In Gaya some rich men teach their daughters to sign their names; some years ago a girl from Deo in this district passed the vernacular scholarship examination. In Champaran, many of the Kurmis about Bettiah (mostly servants of the Raj) teach their girls Kaithi, and even reading as far as the *Ramayana*: they have applied for a school, which will be opened. A khidmutgar (attendant) at Bettiah teaches 12 girls Hindi, Persian, the multiplication table, cooking, and basket-making.'

By the beginning of the present century, interest in female education had increased and the need was felt for trained Indian women teachers because the scheme for the appointment of Hindu or

Muhammadan women to act as peripatetic female teachers had been extended. In view of the wide prevalence of purdah, the extension of zenana education, that is through the house to house visitation of teachers, besides the establishment of schools, was beginning to be advocated. Miss Brock, the Inspectress of Schools, observed in her report for the year 1904-5: 'I found from visiting zenanas and from the expression of native opinion that there was no prejudice against education of girls, but strong feeling against any relaxation of the purdah system for high-caste girls. In support of this is the fact that recently a meeting was held at Muzaffarpur of the more educated classes, with a view to open a strictly purdah school for Hindus. In some parts of these districts, education would be welcome did it not bring with it the presence of men officials. What is needed is a greater extension of the zenana system of teaching for higher class girls as a preliminary step to schools, and for lower class girls strictly purdah schools. These would of necessity have to be wholly inspected by women.'

In 1914 the Government appointed a committee to consider the question of female education. The Committee recommended the starting of intermediate classes in the Girls' High Schools at Bankipur and Cuttack. The Government also decided that 'at least one High School for girls in each division beestablished as funds permit.'

In 1915-16 the total number of Indian girls in institutions of all kinds in Bihar and Orissa was 116,333. Still the percentage of literacy among the women of the Province in 1921 was only 0·6 as against 0·4 in 1911. From 1920-1 to 1923-4 there was a fall in the total number of girls at college and school, but there was a rise in the following year, when the number of girls in girls' schools and colleges rose to 70,779 and in boys' schools and colleges to 40,419. But all this was no more than a drop in the ocean. The percentage of the female population under instruction in Bihar and Orissa in 1927 was 0·7. Referring to Bihar the Hartog Committee observed in 1929: 'There are nearly two and a half million girls of school-going age in Bihar but only 116,000 girls are under instruction in recognized institutions. Of these, over 110,000 are in primary schools, and are almost entirely confined to the two lowest classes. In higher education the province is exceptionally backward and only a few hundred people, mainly Christians and Hindus, are to be found above the middle stage. There are, however, some signs of awakening.'

For some years, the progress in the sphere of Indian girls' education

in Bihar was slow but steady; but a new awakening, helped by nationalism and certain other factors, has substantially contributed to recent progress. Colleges for women have been established at important centres, schools have multiplied and co-education has advanced rapidly.

SANSKRIT LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

This period (1757-1947) covers about two hundred years. Sanskrit literature continued to be produced during this time, especially in Mithilā, though it was not always original or remarkable. It can be said that there is hardly any single small region in India where so much Sanskrit writing was done during this period as in this part of the country. The literature produced covered more than a dozen different subjects and the level of writing was not below standard. This production of Sanskrit literature in Mithilā was entirely due to the rich heritage of Sanskrit scholarship that was maintained and the traditions of teaching and learning Sanskrit which continued despite every disadvantage.

Before a brief survey of the production is taken up, it is necessary to note the contributions of Bihar scholars to philosophic thought and allied subjects in this period. Only a few great names and their work will be referred to here. Some of them could carry on discussions with great ability in Sanskrit even on very abstruse subjects. Some wrote in Sanskrit, English, and Hindi. Sarva-tantra-svatantra Bachcha Jha, Śaśināth Jha, Harihar Kripālu Śāstrī, and Balakṛishṇa Miśra may be cited as great scholars who were widely known for their ability to teach and discuss philosophical thought and classics in Sanskrit. Two other names are conspicuous for their unique service to the cause of Sanskrit and Philosophy in recent times. These are Dr Ganganath Jha (1871-1941) and Rāmāvatār Śarma (1877-1929). The former was a pioneer in the field of reviving ancient philosophical classics through the medium of English. The latter was remarkable for his creative genius which gave us a new philosophy: Paramārtha Darśan.

Dr Ganganath Jha is distinguished for rendering into simple English some of the most abstruse philosophical classics of Sanskrit, with and without commentaries. The following are some of them:—

(I) The *Nyāya-Sūtra* of Gautama with the Bhāshya of Kātyāyana and the Vārtika of Uddyotakāra; (II) The *Padārthadharma-saṅgraha* of Praśastapādāchārya with the *Nyāyākandali* of Śrīdharāchārya;

(III) The *Mimāṁsā Sutras* of Jaimini with the Bhāshya of Śabaraswami; (IV) The *Sloka-Vārtika* of Kumarila Bhaṭṭa; (V) The *Tantra-Vārtika* of Kumarila Bhaṭṭa; (VI) The *Sāṅkhya-tattva-kaumudi* of Vāchaspati Miśra; (VII) The *Yoga-Sūtra* of Patañjali with the Vyāsa-Bhashya; (VIII) The *Siddhānta-muktāvali* of Visvanath Nyāya-panchanana; (IX) The *Khandana-khanda-khādya* of Sri Harsha; (X) The *Tattva-saṅgraha* of Santa-rakshita with the commentary of Kamalaśīla. His other philosophical works include: (*i*) *The Prabhākara School of Pūrva Mimāṁsā*; (*ii*) *Commentary on Mimāṁsā-nukramani of Mandana Miśra* (in Sanskrit): (*iii*) *Śaṅkarāchārya and His Work*; (*iv*) *The Philosophical Discipline*; (*v*) *The Indian Thought* (a quarterly journal of philosophy which he edited from 1907 to 1918).

Being a versatile scholar, Dr Jha wrote on philosophy, literature and law. His translation of *Manusmṛiti*, with the commentary of Medhātithi (in 8 volumes), is regarded as an authority on Hindu jurisprudence. But his greatest contributions are his philosophical works, which are monuments of patient labour and research.

The translations by Dr Jha are not mere translations. They are masterly expositions of philosophical classics presented in a clear and critical form with an admirable lucidity of expression. He had a rare capacity for putting things in a modern way while remaining faithful to the original texts. In the words of Dr Radhakrishnan, 'his combination of orthodox learning with the western method of criticism was a rare phenomenon.'

It was no wonder that Dr Jha's fame spread far beyond the limits of this country. The attitude of the western mind towards his works is well symbolized in the following words of a European friend: 'You have been a real Upādhyāya to all of us who strive to understand the philosophical systems of ancient India. You appear to me to be the blend of the ancient Pandit with his depth of knowledge and of the modern scholar with his wide horizon.'

Another illustrious scholar of Bihar who tried to keep alive the tradition of ancient Sanskrit learning and Indian philosophy was Ramāvatār Śarma. He was a free thinker who possessed a critical mind and a unique personality. He has propounded a philosophy of his own which, according to some, can rank with the six well known systems of India.

Pandit Śarma was a versatile scholar who wrote on grammar, philology, history and literature. His encyclopedic knowledge prompted him to prepare a comprehensive lexicon of Sanskrit, but

this work could not be completed within his lifetime. He was also the first man to write a book on European philosophy in Hindi. But his fame as a philosopher rests chiefly on his *Paramārtha Darśana* (published in 1913).

Paramārtha Darśana is a set of 445 Sanskrit sūtras which are arranged in six chapters, each divided into two sections and are written in the style of ancient philosophers such as Gautama and Kaṇāda. Each topic is introduced in a couple of ślokas, which present the point at issue, the opponent's standpoint (Pūrva-paksha) and the author's own view on the subject (Uttara-Paksha) in a nutshell. There are 120 pairs of such ślokas which are known collectively as *Adhi-karaṇa-ratna-mālā*. Concurrently with the sūtras, the author gives a running account of his own views in a series of ślokas which are printed as footnotes. They are called Vārtika. Not content with these the author tried to elucidate his views further by preparing a detailed Bhāshya (commentary) in Sanskrit prose on his own sūtras, the first chapter of which was published after his death in the journal 'Sanskrit Sanjīvana' (in 1943). The whole work is now being published by the Mithilā Research Institute of Darbhanga.

The main feature of Śarma's thought is his strong insistence on the scientific method, which he regards as the only true method of knowledge, even in the realm of philosophy. He has no faith in supernatural vision or intuition, but only in experience and reason. Hence he recognizes only two means of cognition, perception and inference. He does not accept authority as an autonomous proof of validity in the sphere of factual propositions and is stubbornly opposed to dogmas and superstitions of all kinds. His spirit of revolt against a blind adherence to tradition reminds one of Bacon, who tried to build philosophy anew by demolishing the age-old 'idols'.

Śarma makes a bold departure from the traditional views of orthodox Indian philosophy. He repudiates the conceptions of disembodied self and rebirth which are the fundamental postulates of Āstika Darśana. This smacks of materialism and appears to bring him near Chārvāka. But the philosophy of Śarma is neither materialistic nor atheistic, for he vehemently criticizes the Lokāyata school which denies God and takes matter as the sole reality; he advocates the concept of a Universal Self or God (Sarvātma) who, from all eternity, has manifested himself in the form of this constantly changing universe. The individual selves are like bubbles in the ocean. Just as water assumes the forms of froth and foam, so the Universal Self

assumes the forms of finite selves and objects which are essentially the same as himself.

Thus the philosophy of Śarma is a thorough-going pantheism, but he refutes the idea of an indeterminate Absolute (Nirguṇa Nirākāra Brahma). He is also opposed to the Māyāvāda (Illusion theory) of Śaṅkara. The God of Śarma is a dynamic principle that is for ever unfolding itself in the process of cosmic evolution.

Śarma finds fault with the various systems of Indian philosophy. According to him, subject (sākshi) and object (vishaya) are inseparable aspects of the same Reality. There is no subject without the object; there is no object without the subject. To forget this is to fall into error. Such error, according to him, is found in Kapila, Chārvāka and Śaṅkara. Kapila conceives an artificial divorce between subject and object. Chārvāka reduces the subject to the object. Śaṅkara reduces the object to the subject. All these are unwarrantable. Another error is to pulverize the one into many. This is exemplified in the Jaina view of many souls (jīvas), in the Buddhist theory of momentary cognitions and the Nyāya-vaiśeshika pluralism of selves and atoms. A third error lies in trying to limit and locate the Illimitable in some supposed place or person. This has given rise to false beliefs in personal gods, divine incarnations and supernatural beings. The seeker after truth should beware of all such misconceptions.

Śarma thus refutes the orthodox as well as the heterodox view, and carves out a unique system of his own. His is an eclectic philosophy which tries to combine the merits and eschew the demerits of previous thinkers. In his search for truth he is above racial or regional prejudices and accepts that which is right whether it comes from Ramānuja or Hegel. In fact his philosophy seeks to present a well-balanced synthesis of all that is best in eastern and western thought.

Coming to the Sanskrit literary activities of the period, we observe somewhat the same characteristics that we encountered earlier. In Bihar, the traditions of Sanskrit learning and authorship are practically confined to Maithilis living either in Bihar or at the courts of kings, even as distant as that of Jammu and Kashmir.

The subjects are as varied as in the previous period and the production is as ample as before. But apart from Kāvya and literature proper, books on Dharmaśāstra, Jyotisha and Tantra predominate. Not a few are written on grammar, yoga, ethics and so on, but there is a general lack of originality.

What is important however, is that while Sanskrit has been losing its hold on the minds of the modern English-educated Biharis, the Maithils have managed to maintain their traditions in Sanskrit learning and have produced a considerable literature on a variety of subjects. Probably in no other State, and in no other part of Bihar is Sanskrit so loved and persistently cultivated and on such a scale as in Mithilā, the land of Janaka and Yājñyavalkya.

Obviously it is not possible here to enumerate or deal with the number of Sanskrit authors and books written during this period. But one can certainly have a fair idea of the activity in this field from the brief account given below.

Not all that was written has been preserved, nor is there any exhaustive or authentic record kept. But a general survey made so far by scholars reveals that a very large number of books, small and big, original as well as commentative, were written by a number of authors.

The subjects covered may be classified under the following heads:

1. 'Kāvya' and general literature include poetry of all kinds, dramas, treatises, and literary commentaries.

2. 'Kosha' or lexicons include all kinds of dictionaries, most of them in verse. It is noteworthy that among them is a Persian-Sanskrit dictionary called *Vākachāturya-taraṅginī*.

3. 'Vyākaraṇa' includes all books on grammar, original as well as commentaries. A large number of books were written on this subject.

4. 'Chhandas' include books on metre and metrical systems. It may be noted that one of the books treats of metres in the Prakrit compositions also.

5. 'Nīti' includes books on politics, ethics and principles of human conduct and behaviour. This subject also was popular with writers. In this case it may be said that writers in Bihar maintained the tradition of Kauṭilya and others.

6. 'Kāmasūtra' includes all writing on the art of love and erotics. It may be recalled here that Vatsyāyana's *Kāmasūtras* written in Pāṭaliputra or Patna centuries earlier, is still a classic. Writers in Bihar kept up the tradition during this period as regards the interesting subject of love.

7 'Jyotisha' which includes astronomy, mathematics and astrology has been an important subject of study in Bihar. A number of books were written during the period on this subject. One of them *Vanamālā* is on rains in different seasons and how to predict them.

8. 'Veda' here means only the commentaries on the Veda. One book by Parmeśwara Jha which is a commentary on a commentary by Gunavishṇu is worth noting.

9. 'Tantraśāstra' includes books on Tāntric subjects, the cult of the Mother Goddess, occult powers, yoga, modes of worship, mystic centres in the body, meditation and so on. A very large number of books were written during this period, both original and commentative.

10. 'Dharmaśāstra' includes books on religious rules, discipline, good conduct, usage, observance of vows, religious duties and so on. Many books were written on the subject during the period. As an example as to how writers did not neglect even ordinary things, we may note that Yogadatta Jha wrote a book called *Vapanaviveka* which lays down rules for shaving correctly!

11. 'Darśana' is a general term for philosophy and all that it means. A large number of books were written on Nyāya (logic), Mīmāṁsā (the science of religious rites and actions), yoga (the science of breath and meditation), Vedānta (the philosophy of the Upanishads). All these are included under the general head of the six classical Darśanas.

Bihar and especially Mithilā has always been very fond of Nyāya and the tradition was maintained during this period by the production of a number of books on this subject.

12. 'Purāṇa' includes works on the Purāṇas, their summary or summaries. 'Rājāvali', a history of the kings of India from the beginning of Kaliyuga to Warren Hastings, written by Vijayagovind may be classed as a modern Purāṇa. It may be noted that Rājavallabha Miśra wrote a book on the places of pilgrimage in India at the instance of Mr Colebrooke, who took great interest in Sanskrit, and was himself a scholar.

13. 'Bhakti' includes all devotional literature. The bulk of this kind of literature is big enough.

In addition to this classified list of subjects, many books in Sanskrit were written which could be called miscellaneous. For instance, *Kalā Kaumudi* by Ramāvatāra Śarma, published in 1904, is an introduction to modern physical sciences and his *Bhāshātattwa* is an introduction to the modern science of language.

Maithili Language and Literature

In the middle of the 18th century we find Maithili literature

characterized by two important features: while the language as a medium of expression showed progress, sometimes phenomenal, the forms of literary composition remained old and stereotyped, with almost no inclination to adopt any changes.

We have already noted the vogue of Kīrtaniya dramas in Maithili in the 17th-18th centuries which used the Kṛishṇa legend as their theme. These dramas had a set frame which had been laid down by such masters as Umapati and Rāmadās (17th century). The tradition of this type of drama, with an abundant use of Sanskrit and Prākṛit, continued during the whole of the 18th century and was carried on into the 19th.

The progress which the Maithili language had made by about the 17th century can be judged by Umāpati's *Pārijātaharaṇa*. His songs have a freshness all their own, and would appear to be modern enough and lack the legacy of Prākṛitic affectations. But we find the culmination of this tendency in a simplification of language with a view to bringing it nearer to the spoken tongue, in the *Kṛishṇa-janma* of Manabodha (mid-18th century). His attempt would seem to have been to exploit the inner potentiality of the Maithili spoken by the masses. As he attempted a Mahākāvya, he took for his subject-matter stories from the Purāṇas, but his unconventional approach is unmistakable throughout.

There were thus two types of writers round about the middle of the 18th century, the classicists and the reformists or realists.

Among those who refused to deviate from the classical Kīrtaniya traditions, mention may be made of Ramāpati, the author of *Rukmiṇiharaṇa*; Lala Kavi, the author of *Gauri-Svayaṁvara*; Nandipati, the author of *Kṛishṇa-Kelimālā*, Gokulānanda, the author of *Manacarita nāṭaka*; Karṇa-Jayānanda, the author of *Rukmāṅgada nāṭaka* and so on.

In the 19th century, this tradition was followed up by such dramatists as Kanhārāmadās who also wrote *Gauri svayaṁvara*, Ratnapāni who wrote *Usāhāraṇa*, Bhanunath who wrote the *Prabhavatiharaṇa* and Harsanath who wrote *Usāharaṇa*.

It was obvious that the Kīrtaniya dramas could not confine themselves to the Kṛishṇa theme and they soon began to include such episodes as the marriage of Śiva and Pārvati. As time went on such typically Maithili customs as kovara, nainajogina and baṭagamani were introduced (see *Rukmiṇi svayaṁvara* of Ramāpati and *Gaurisvayaṁvara* of Lala Kavi) as a concession to popular taste and demand.

The popular taste was amply met by the reformists or realists, who were probably headed by Manabodha, whose language approached very nearly that of *Krishṇakelimālā* by Nandipati. It is a pity that later writers, such as Ratnapāni, Harsanath and others, instead of attempting to write in the spoken language of the people, began to use an ornate style full of figures of speech, on the pattern of later Sanskrit literature. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the majority of writers, had a clear bias towards the classical models of Mithilā. These had previously influenced regions right up to Assam. This was mainly due to their orthodox Sanskrit culture which was almost untouched by any outside influence. It may be mentioned here that the devotional and secular writings of Manganirama, Laksminath, Sahebarāmadās and others formed a class by themselves, voicing as they did the personal and genuine feelings of the poets concerned.

It was not until the last quarter of the 19th century that western influences began to tell on Maithili literature. With the death of Maharaja Maheśvara Sinha in 1860, the Darbhanga Raj was entrusted to the Court of Wards and the tradition of the patronage of Maithili received a rude jolt. Urdu was introduced, and western forms of speech were at a premium. The description of the famine of 1881 by Chaturakavi may be taken as an illustration in point. But at the same time there was a compensatory development in the form of the introduction of English education. In 1888, the Darbhanga Raj School was started. Important work in connexion wtih Maithili language and literature was taken up by Grierson, who published his *Maithili Chrestomathy* in 1882 and *Twenty-one Vaishṇava Hymns* in 1884. He himself studied Maithili critically and encouraged several pandits to examine their language, particularly its grammar.

It seems that Pandits Chanda Jha and Jivana Jha took this opportunity of cultivating the Maithili language and literature along new lines. Chanda Jha wrote the *Ramayana* in flowing, idiomatic Maithili and poured forth his soul in devotional songs dedicated to Śiva and to Pārvati. He also tried his hand at writing Maithili prose translating the whole of the *Purusha-Pariksha* of Vidyapati. A few lines are given below as samples of the prose of those days:

'Chhali Gangatir men Kampila nam nagari. Tataya Hemangada namak raja chhalah. Se swarge prapt santa mantrilok tani rajak putra Ratnangada nam kumar kan raja kayal. Se puna rajya

pabi pitridhan son garbit o yauban mada son anyaya prabritta hoit bhelah.' The rendering in English is as follows:—

On the banks of the Gangā, stood a city called Kampila. There lived a king named Hemangada. On his attaining heaven, the ministers made the king's son and heir-apparent, Ratnangada, the king. He, on obtaining the kingdom, became proud of his ancestral riches and was prone to do all kinds of injustice through the youth which had gone to his head.

The above is a quotation from Dr Amarnath Jha's introduction to Pandit Baldeva Miśra's book on Kavivara Chanda Jha.

As a matter of fact, the inauguration of the modern age in Indian languages and literature is associated with the beginning of prose literature of various kinds such as essays, criticism, novels and short-stories. This process was delayed in Maithili because the introduction of western education took place a little later there than in other parts of Bihar.

With Jivana Jha we really reach new ground. He wrote no actual prose work as such, and yet he served the cause of Maithili prose indirectly. He broke away completely from the tradition of Kīrtaniya dramas which had a legacy of Sanskrit and Prakrit and wrote dramas on social problems entirely in Maithili.

It may now be helpful to study the development of the different types of Maithili literature. The pattern of drama was set by Pandit Jīvana Jha, who wrote at least three well-known dramas, *Sundara sañyoga*, *Samavati Punarjanma*, and *Narmada-Sagaraśattak*. Munshi Raghunandanadas, to name one among many dramatists, has tried to interest Maithili speakers by means of abstractions and personifications of virtues and vices, rather than by the artistic presentation of current topics. It is a pity however, that except for *Jivana-Saṅgharsa* by Kumar Ganganand Sinha and *Munikamatibhrama* by Sri Yoganand Jha, there are few attempts at dramatic art which are worthy of mention from the point of view of the stage and histrionics.

Pandit Jivana Jha was a pioneer dramatist, who made significant contributions to poetry as well. The easy flow of his lines brought a freshness to Maithili poetry unknown for a long time. We may quote the following lines with translation:—

'Birchal cheekan chauras chakar chanan por
Kadamak dari banhaol dridha kay resam dor
Jalad patal nabha ghumdal umadal manas mor
Damini sam tanu pahiral piya anurag pator.'

(She) prepared a plank of sandalwood, smooth, of good dimensions and broad enough. Also was the string of silk firmly tied to the branch of the Kadamba-tree.
As the clouds gathered on the horizon, my mind leaped up with joy and I put on my silk-cloth in the form of the 'love' of my dear one, like a cloud illumined by 'lightning'.

About the time of Pandit Jivana Jha, as also after him, we find Maithili poets divided into two groups, (i) those who follow the old descriptive method, and (ii) those who introduce imaginative elements to compel literary delight. To the former school belongs a host of modern poets, most prominent among whom are Kaviśekhara Badarinath Jha and Kavivara Sitaram Jha. In point of time, the poet Pandit Sitaram Jha comes first: he belongs to the 'Moda-group' (entertainers) of writers organized by that colourful personality, the late Pandit Muralidhar Jha.

Pandit Sitaram Jha is the most popular by sheer dint of his easy style and choice of subject-matter. He has kept the Maithilis continuously interested in his writings for about forty years. It is good to know that he has recently begun the writing of an epic. In this field he is expected to give a better account of his undoubted descriptive talents.

So far as pure poetic talent is concerned, Pandit Badarinath Jha is by far the best. He entered the field of Maithili poetry after having made a name for himself with such a Sanskrit masterpiece as *Radhapriṇaya*. In Maithili, he has written *Ekāvali parṇinaya*, an epic in fifteen cantos which deals with the heroic exploits of Ekavira and leads up to his marriage with Ekāvali. It bristles with examples of rhetorical excellence and the poet's superb power of invoking 'suggestions' of the highest order. Here below are a few lines with translation.

'Ghar Ghar chatur bilāsini lesal mangal dīp
Ārati kai ariali jani anal madan-mahīp
Prachi-mukh-chandan-tilak, rajani-rati-ras-ked
Trisit chakori-drig amrit gel gaganmen chand.'

'In all the houses shrewd young ladies lighted auspicious evening-lamps: they invited and welcomed, as it were, king Cupid with due formalities and rituals.'

Like the mark of Chandana (Sandal) on the forehead of the 'East', like the solid form of 'pleasure' flowing from the love-pranks of the 'night', like nectar to the thirsting eyes of the 'chakori', the moon went up the sky.

This new type of poetry began to be written in Maithili when the late Bhubneśwara Singh 'Bhuvan' started his literary compositions. His '*Asarha*' was the harbinger and very soon Mithilā became a nest of singing birds. The late Acyutananda Datta, Bholalal Das, Surendra Jha, 'Sumana', Kasikanta Miśra, 'Madhupa', Chandranath Miśra, 'Amara', Kanchinath Jha, 'Kiran', Iśanath Jha are among the prominent poets who have tried their hand at composition along these new lines. It would seem that all these poets write according to their own light, following the logic of individual development. Even so, while Baidyanath Miśra has proved himself the most progressive by introducing new ideology and venturing new experiments in metre and rhythm, Pandit Surendra Jha, with his steadfast adherence to classical poise and dignity, has produced literature of permanent interest. We may quote two illustrations, one from each of them with translations:

'Satya thik Sansar
Satya thik manab samajak kramik unnati
Kramik briddhi bikas
Satya thik sangharsrat jantak i itihas
Satya dharti, satya thik akash
Param satya manukkh apanhi thik.'
True is the world,
True is the gradual progress of human society,
The gradual growth of intellect.
True is this history of the struggling millions
True is the earth, and the sky
Supreme by truth is the 'Man' himself.

From *Citra*, p. 85, Tibhukti Publication.

'Vari gel bakul gandhe digban
Ketaki parage andha pawan
Kekika nritya ghar ghar hocchha
Ghanshyamak darshan savak nayan
Hamrahi anganmen jwalit jwal
Achhi dagdha bheli alakak bal.'

The jungles on all sides are thick with the smell of 'Bakula'; the pollen of 'Ketaki' has filled the wind and made it dense; in every

home the she-peacock is dancing; everybody's eyes feast upon the dark clouds (meaning also beloved Kṛishṇa), but it is in my home alone where the flame of love remains unquenched. Thus is the young lady of Alaka agonised (on account of unrequited love).

From *Pratipada*, p. 19, Maithili Mandir, Darbhanga.

Lastly we may consider the most important of the novels and short stories.

Story-writing in Maithili began with Pandit Parameśvara Jha, whose *Simantini-Akhyāyika* was a pioneer work. He was followed by Pandit Jivacha Miśra, Śaśinatha Chaudhari and others. But the number of readers of Maithili novels did not increase till Professor Harimohan Jha appeared on the scene. It is to his lasting credit that in spite of his satirization of almost everything old, he has succeeded in becoming popular and is widely read on account of his wit and common sense. Although Kumar Ganganand Sinha is older as a writer of fiction, his best work belongs to the last twenty years. His *Agilahi*, dealing as it does with subtle studies of typical Mithilā characters, is an excellent piece of art. Maithili fiction includes in its purview social problems and their intricacies. Sri Yogananda Jha's *Bhalā manusa* came as almost the first satisfying work in this direction. Among other writers of fiction, mention may be made of Pandit Upendranath Jha 'Vyasa', Professor Umanath Jha, Dr Braja Kisore Varma, and Sri Manmohan Jha.

The writers of Maithili literary criticism or essays, include Dr Umesha Miśra, Kumar Gangananda Sinha, Prof. Srikṛishṇa Miśra, Prof. Ramanath Jha, Bholalal Das 'Manipadma', Dr Jayakant Miśra and Sri Narendranath Das.

Bhojpuri Folk-Literature

Bhojpuri is spoken mainly in Saran, Champaran and the surrounding areas. There are those who maintain that Bhojpuri has not much literature worth the name, but considerable folk-literature exists in the countryside and this is gradually coming to light. In addition to the Bhojpuri songs of some of the Buddhist Siddhas, works by Kabir, Dharamdas, Shivanarayan, Dharanidas, Lakshmisakhi and other saint-poets are now available. The literary output in Bhojpuri in recent times is also impressive in quantity and quality, including as it does numerous poetical, dramatic, and fiction works. The beginning of the publication of Bhojpuri periodicals is a pointer to the progressive future of the language.

The tradition of oral Bhojpuri literature has survived in plenty in the form of folk-songs, folk-tales and folk-lore. Dr Grierson made the first attempt to collect and publish them in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Vols. XVI and XVIII) and in the *Indian Antiquary* (1885). Subsequently, William Cook, Growser, Irvin, Archer and other foreign scholars brought out various collections. Mention may be made of Kṛishṇadev Upadhyaya, Durgaśaṅkar Prasad Singh and Ram Naresh Tripathi, among the Hindi scholars who have published collections of Bhojpuri folk-songs and folk-tales.

Ram Naresh Tripathi is of the opinion that the speakers of no other dialect have made oral preservation of as many songs as the Bhojpuris. The most important feature of Bhojpuri folk-lore is that it serves to reflect the joys and sorrows, the tears and laughter of the ordinary man in a most wonderful way. The ever-recurring themes, refer to the social, religious and family life of the common man. The tradition is old and unbroken. Bhojpuri folk-songs undoubtedly leave the folk-tales far behind in this respect. All that contributes to the culture of the people is beautifully depicted in the songs. The thread and marriage ceremonies may be mentioned as examples. While the priests chant Vedic hymns, the women contribute their own melodious tunes. All the details of the thread ceremony are described in the folk-songs. In the song below, the boy who is being initiated begs from a woman whom he addresses as 'mother'. He is leaving for Kashi to begin his studies. This is what the lady asks of the boy who begs:—

O, my child, what would you have—'dhoti' or book, or the saffron thread do you desire?

O, my child, would you have gold as gift or the thread (you wear) on your shoulder?

During this ceremony the boy carries a stick of Palāśa-wood, and wears a loin-cloth of 'munja' grass and a deer-skin. This austere dress of the brahmachari is described in one or two of the songs. Says a woman:—

O, go forth in the forest, e'en the blades of grass are still and the tiger roars not,

O, out with a stick of 'Palāśa' and seek a deer-skin.

The marriage ceremony is also depicted in these songs in great detail, from the 'tilak' and the marriage procession to the departure of the bride. The procession arrives with pomp and splendour at the house of the bride's father while the women sing:—

Whence comes the decorated tusker, whence such fine robes?
Whence comes the prince to marry, diadem on his forehead, betel in mouth?
From Gorakhpur comes the tusker, the fine robes from Patna.
The Prince of Kashi has come to marry, diadem on his forehead, betel in mouth.

The emotions of the bride and bridegroom have been exquisitely expressed in some of the songs sung on such occasions. How aptly does the bride express her feelings in this song:—

O Banwari, so young is this my spouse.
I lay with this my young spouse on the inner verandah.
O Banwari, the wolf howls in the field of 'rahari',
He does not make love but opens the door.
O Banwari, I am afire tip to toe.
He sleeps not by me, but near my feet.
O Banwari, I am afire tip to toe.
Hearing the wolf howling in the field of 'rahari'
Weeps the young terrified spouse.
Comes the mother from the courtyard and the sister from the room.
O Banwari, 'who has beaten the child?' they ask.

Bhojpuri is full of songs to be sung at the birth of a son. They are of two varieties—'Sohar' and 'Khelauna'. The young woman experiencing the agonies of child-birth, the mother-in-law soliciting the well-being of the daughter-in-law, the husband running to fetch the midwife, the midwife demanding princely gifts, these are the principal themes of the 'Sohar', while those of the 'Khelauna' are the cries of the new-born babe, the ecstasy of the mother, the happiness of the mother-in law and the joy of the father, who is ready to distribute all that he possesses in gifts. When a son is born at long last after much prayer, the mother-in-law describes her happiness thus:—

What joy the son is born, I sing the auspicious song.
Long may the child live, I shall see him and be happy.
My son's wife is mother now, my joy knows no bounds.
I shall carry the child in my arms, laugh and play with it.

Bhojpuri has a class of songs to be sung during the various seasons and months of the years. 'Phagua' and 'Chaita' are among them. The former is sung in the Spring and the latter in the month of 'Chaita'. The erotic element in the common man's life is clearly reflected in them. A bride implores the bird-catcher to strangle the cuckoo which has disturbed her sleep. This is what is expressed in this 'Chaita':—

Ah, I was sleeping with my spouse on the bedstead.
The love-lorn cuckoo!
Oh, I fall at thy feet, O bird-catcher.
The love-lorn cuckoo! Strangle her and bring her to me.
The love-lorn cuckoo!

The humdrum life of the ordinary people is also depicted in the songs which are meant to be sung when physical labour is being performed. 'Sohni' and 'Janta' may be mentioned as apt examples. 'Sohni' and the grinding of grain in a 'Janta' are generally done by women, so that the sentiments of women find pointed expression in these songs. A young woman grinding grain in the 'Janta' narrates the miserable life she has to lead in her father-in-law's house:—

Oh, father mine, I implore you never give a daughter in marriage to the northerner.
The northerners are pitiless, father mine, they torture me in so many ways.
They make me grind wheat in the night and make me spin in the daytime.
They wake me up when I fall asleep and they have naught in their homes.

The songs in which the sentiments of men-folk are described in particular are called 'Biraha'. In fact no other class of folk-songs depicts village life as finely as the 'Biraha'.

Many Bhojpuri songs are meant to be sung during festivals such as 'godhan', 'bahura', 'pidhai' and 'chath'. Needless to say, the religious aspect of folk-life predominates in these songs.

The following is an example:—

The 'bahangi' (scale-like carrier made of bamboo) is made of green bamboo, the 'bahangi' goes a-swinging.
"O you, be the carrier, and carry the 'bahangi' to the river bank!"
"Where dost thou carry the 'bahangi'?" asks the wayfarer.
"Thou art blind, O wayfarer. The 'bahangi' goes to Mother 'Chath'."
"'Chath' who our mother is, thither we go."

The extent to which these songs are permeated by folk-life should be clear from the foregoing account, and the songs themselves, having come down from time immemorial, are sufficient proof of this fact.

MAGAHI FOLK-LITERATURE

The name Magahi is derived from Māgadhi. Māgadhi was the

dialect of the people of Māgadha. Māgadhi (together with Sauraseni,) is one of the ancient languages spoken in large areas of eastern and northern India. It has been intimately connected with the life of the people from very early times. Though nearly all Magahi literature is in oral form, its tradition has been unbroken. The Buddhist Siddhas are held to have flourished in the sixth century and onwards. Many of the Siddhas chose Magahi as the medium of expression for their feelings and thoughts. It is thus obvious that Magahi must have been the language of the people even earlier and that the Siddhas took to it in order to spread their thoughts among the masses.

The cultured section of the population tended to remain aloof from the literature written in the language of the people; it is not surprising that unadorned poetical creations in that language should have failed to be appreciated in the royal court of the capital and in the gatherings of wealthy connoisseurs of literature. Some of the eminent classical Indian playwrights of the past used spoken dialects in their works, but that was only to produce a realistic effect. For instance, the women, servants and other such characters of Kālidās use Prākṛit in their dialogues.

The people of Magadh have used the dialect of their own region to express their joy and sorrow on festive and such other occasions for ages past. Many of the poets who expressed the emotions of the ordinary man and woman employed the current dialect in their poetical works.

Magadh is principally an agricultural region and is very beautiful. From the Paurāṇic age, it has had the advantage of establishing great empires which have extended beyond its boundaries and influenced the entire land. Its capital, Pāṭaliputra, was for centuries the political centre of India, and the great centre of Hindu pilgrimage, Gaya, is also located in Magadh. It is also sacred to the Buddhists, being associated with the life and teaching of the Buddha. Because of this, the inhabitants of Magadh have been in close cultural and religious touch with the people of different regions outside the country, which broadened their outlook. That is why, judged from the point of view of emotional sincerity and poetic excellence, the Magahi songs are of a high order and why the spiritual and occult experiences of the people have been successfully expressed. Attempts at collecting traditional folk-literature only began during the British rule, and not much Magahi folk-literature of earlier ages has been traced. What is now available however, is enough to prove its antiquity and unbroken tradition.

The following examples serve to indicate some of the aspects of life described in the Magahi songs:—

1. 'I shan't accept this simple Sari, I must have a colourful petticoat, O my brother's wife!
   Nor this blouse, I must have a chemise of dappled cloth, O my brother's wife!
   No, I shan't accept either bracelets or armlets;
   I shall only accept a pair of scintillating ear-rings, O my brother's wife!'

Thus speaks the younger sister of the husband to her sister-in-law in a 'Sohar' which is sung on the happy occasion of the birth of a son.

2. Sleep baby, otherwise the dog would bite off your ear.
   Mother has gone to work and father to the shop.
   You were born in his absence, who shall give you a name?
   I, the nurse-maid, would give you a name and sing of you.

This is a 'lori' (lullaby) being sung by a nurse-maid trying to put a child to sleep.

Here is a song sung at the time of the departure of the daughter to her husband's house:—

3. The seven Gangas swell when the mother weeps, the oceans swell when weeps the father.
   When the brother weeps tears moisten his robe, heartless is the brother's wife.
   Says the mother, 'Come every day,' the father says, 'In six months.'
   The brother, 'I shall send the palanquin for you when there are festivities, O Sister mine.'
   But the brother's wife keeps quiet as she does not want her to return!

And here is a song sung during the 'Chath' festival widely celebrated in Magadh:—

4. For a cocoanut, O Dinanath, I went to the grocer's shop.
   The grocer's son, O Dinanath, did me insult
   'Away, O, away with you.
   Sterile woman, go away.
   Your shadow would make my own wife sterile, go away.'

A woman has gone to the grocer's shop to buy a cocoanut for the 'Chath' ceremony which she is observing in order to pray for an issue and this is the treatment meted out to her by the grocer's son, who looks upon her as a curse. The prejudice against sterile women is expressed in this form.

Moving descriptions of all the aspects of popular life are to be found in the Magahi folk-songs. There are a host of songs which describe the ecstasy of Spring, the Zoola (swing) during the rainy season, the pangs of separation, the bickerings of daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law, the jocularity of sisters-in-law, the affection of brothers and sisters and the love of parents for their children.

MODERN HINDI LITERATURE

It was in this period (1757 to 1947) that Indian languages and literature came under the direct influence of English literature and western ways of life and thought. As with all the other Indian languages, Hindi was very much affected. So far, Sanskrit had almost had the monopoly of influence on all Indian languages and literatures, including the newly-born Urdu. There is no doubt also that Persian had had some influence, especially in the north and that it had affected the southern vocabularies by introducing words especially concerning the administration of revenue and justice. With the introduction of English education, however, modern influences began to play on the Indian mind in many respects. Not only in vocabulary, but in literary patterns, ways of thought and such forms of literature as short stories, novels, journals and so on, Hindi began to be affected. The history of the Hindi language and literature during this period is therefore very interesting. Though it is not possible to give details here, it is sufficient to say that Hindi has taken large strides and is abreast of the times, keeping pace with sister languages in the matter of modern developments in language and literature.

The earliest Hindi prose in Bihar constitutes perhaps the earliest prose in Hindi in general. A rare MS., discovered by Sri Jayadeva Miśra of Patna University, is a Hindi translation of the *Sūrya Siddhānta*. The translator is Kumudānanda Miśra, who made his translation in *c.* 1860. It is a fine specimen of the early Hindi prose which still awaits publication. Of the four slightly later contemporary prose writers in Hindi, namely Sadal Miśra, Lallūlāla, Ins'āallāh Khan and Sadāsukhalāla, the first belonged to Arrah and is regarded by common consent as having laid the foundation of that prose-style which came to stay. Both Sadal Miśra and Lallūlāla were teachers and writers of Hindi in the Fort William College in the early nineteenth century. The former wrote a more chaste and well-knit prose than the latter. This was not recognized or appreciated by the East

India Company authorities at the time, but posterity has proved that they were wrong.

The rejection of the chaste Hindi prose-style evolved by Sadal Miśra betrayed the future attitude of the alien rulers towards the language to be adopted for the courts and other official purposes. It was Bihar that took the lead in demanding a change in the hybrid language which had been imposed upon her in 1875 as the official as well as the school language. This early language controversy was led by a Bengali educationist, Bhudev Mukhopadhyaya. The official attitude in Bihar and Oudh was adamant, the then Commissioner of Patna being the only notable exception. Undeterred by the attitude of the higher authorities, Bhudev Mukhopadhyaya encouraged a host of Hindi writers to prepare text-books. By 1880 the situation had changed considerably, first in the schools, and later on in the courts, and Bihar had succeeded in securing official recognition for Hindi before any other province.

Bihar not only led in securing official recognition for Hindi, but went ahead in the sphere of creative prose-writing under the leadership of Bharatendu Harischandra, who belonged to Vārānasi, but most of whose later writings were published by Babu Ramadin Singh of the Khadgavilasa Press of Patna. The Bihari writers who had so far been engaged in preparing text-books woke up to the new vista opened up by Bharatendu. The *Bihar Bandhu*, the first Hindi weekly of Bihar, was started in 1872 and appeared for the next thirty years or so under the editorship of Keśavarāma Bhaṭṭa. A number of Hindi periodicals beside the *Bihar Bandhu* were launched from Patna and other towns of Bihar in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Once out of the single-track of four-line verses into which it had sunk during the previous period of cultural decadence, Hindi literature made an all-round development to which Bihar's contribution was immense and valuable.

The first quarter of the present century was dominated by savants and scholars of the stature of Śivanandana Sahaya, Rāmāvatara Śarma, Ganganatha Jha, Sakalanarayana Śarma, Akshayavata Miśra, Jagannatha Prasada Chaturvedi, Iśvari Prasada Śarma, Chandraśekhara Śastri and Rāmadahina Miśra. Sivapujana Sahaya, Jagannatha Prasad Miśra, Lakshminarayana Singh, 'Sudhansu', Nalinavilochana Śarma, Kesari Kumara Singh and Janaki Vallabha Śastri, all of whom are representative modern Hindi writers belonging to Bihar.

DRAMA

Drama, the most potent weapon in the armoury of literature, proved to be very popular with the newly-inspired writers at the beginning of this age. Bihar had to its credit a number of notable playwrights among whom Vijayānanda Tripathi, Keśavarāma Bhaṭṭa, Rajarajeśvari Prasada Singh, and Chandraśekharadhara Miśra, deserve special mention. Clubs for amateur dramatic performances were also started, one of the earliest being that organized by Damodara Śastri, a colleague of Bharatendu himself. Jainendra Kishore and Iśvari Prasada Śarma wrote a number of actable plays in the twenties of this century and Kṛipanatha Miśra and Ramakṛishṇa Benipuri are outstanding among the older living playwrights.

At the beginning of the century the playwrights of Bihar strove to adopt the western dramatic technique made familiar by the plays of Shakespeare, some of which had already been translated into Hindi. These playwrights, however, did not entirely abandon the dramatic tradition represented at its best by Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti, though more often than not they copied the hybrid technique evolved by the professional hack-writers of scripts for the commercial Parsi stage. The difference lay in the purpose of the plays, which, without being 'problem plays', aimed at offering solutions for social evils and were invariably didactic in tone. The silent screen proved to be a death-blow to the Hindi drama of literary importance, before it had been able to establish itself on the commercial stage. Plays of considerable literary merit, continued however to be written. These were avidly read, but infrequently and indifferently staged by amateurs.

The modern closet drama in Hindi had its first exponent in a Bihari playwright, Kṛipanatha Miśra, who published his epoch-making *Mani-Gosvami* in the late thirties. It is the first Hindi play in three acts without the usual number of scenes. Unfortunately it appeared too early to receive the recognition it deserved.

Bibbo ka Bibboka, written by Nalin Vilochan Śarma early in the present decade, is the first full-length poetic drama in Hindi on the lines of T. S. Eliot. Jagadishchandra Mathur published a number of one-act and three-act plays while he was in Bihar. These have proved very successful on the amateur stage and should go well professionally if they ever materialize in the Hindi-speaking region. Ramakṛishṇa Benipuri has a number of popular plays to his credit.

FICTION

At the beginning of the Modern period, fiction also had many exponents in Bihar. A number of the novels of Chandraśekharadhara Miśra were unluckily burnt to ashes and are not available. One of the earliest original Hindi novels is *Gharau Ghatana* by Bhuvaneśvara Miśra. Raja Kamalananda Singh translated Bankim Chandra's *Ānanda Maṭh* and Devakinandana Khatri started writing his mystery novels at Muzuffarpur, though he moved later to Vārānasi. Among those who have translated into Hindi all that is worth while in Bengali fiction are Iśvari Prasad Śarma, Girijanandana Tivari, Chandraśekhara Pathaka, Akshayavaṭa Miśra, Raghunatha Prasad, Parasanatha Tripathi, Janardana Jha 'Janasidana', Kartikeyacharana Mukhopadhyaya, Jagadiśa Jha 'Vimal', some of whom have also written original novels and short stories. Of significant original writing in this field, Brajanandana Sahaya is an early important exponent with novels such as *Saundaryopāsaka* and *Lāla China*. Śivapujana Sahaya, Nandakishore Tivari, Radhikaramana Singh, Avadhanarayana, Prafullachandra Ojha 'Mukta', Janardana Jha 'Dvija', and Kṛipanatha Miśra are some of the more eminent Hindi novelists and short-story writers of Bihar, who did most of their writing in the twenties and thirties. More recently, Nalina Vilochana Śarma, Divakara Prasad Vidyarthi, Radhakṛishṇa, Nareśa, Śivachandra Śarma and others, have made their mark, and some of them continue to write significantly.

The fiction of Bihar, consists mainly of realistic novels with a purpose which are very much like those of Premachandra. Those of Brajanandana Sahaya, Śivapujana Sahaya and Kṛipanatha Miśra, however, are not merely outstanding among those written in Bihar, but among Hindi novels in general. The *Saundaryopāsaka* of Brajanandana Sahaya anticipated the individual in the stream of consciousness method which came into vogue under the influence of the modern English novel and as a result of an acquaintance with psycho-analysis, and Śivapujana Sahaya wrote the first 'regional' Hindi novel, *Dehāti Duniyā*, at least two decades before this type of fiction caught the imagination of Indian novelists. The *Pyāsa* of Kṛipanatha Miśra, published about a decade and a half earlier, is the only Hindi novel which attempts, on a limited scale and in a diluted form, what was done by James Joyce in his controversial, but remarkable novels. Alone, however, among the established novelists Radhika Ramana Singh continues to be prolific and he could easily

have risen to greater heights but for the fact that his prose is interspersed with rhymes and purple patches. Some of the foremost contemporary Hindi novelists, Nagarjuna and Phanishvara Natha 'Reṇu' to mention only two, belong to Bihar.

POETRY

While modern Hindi, known linguistically as 'Khari-Boli' was the unchallenged vehicle of prose in the Hindi-speaking areas, that of poetry still remained, with a few exceptions, Vrajabhāshā, the standard literary Hindi for centuries past. Even the literary revolutionary Bharatendu, clung to the traditional standard language and form, although he made them do many things besides expressing brilliantly the erotic sentiment to which they had become confined in the course of time.

Among the Bihari poets of this period, who wrote in Vrajabhāshā, the outstanding ones were Avadhakishore Sahaya of Daltongunj, Raja Kamalananda Singh of Purnea, Naganarayana Singh of Chapra, Baba Sumera Singh—the Sikh guru of Haramandir of Patna, Rajarajeśvari Prasad of Surajpura, Nakchedi Tivari of Dumraon, and Janardana Jha 'Janasidana' of Muzaffarpur. The minor poets who flourished under the patronage of the literary-minded zamindars of Bihar are too numerous to be mentioned here.

With poetry still being written in Vrajabhāshā and prose adopting 'Khari-Boli' as its vehicle, Hindi literature progressed on lame legs. This literary dichotomy had to be removed. What Bharatendu had failed to achieve was made possible mainly by the efforts of Ayodhya Prasad Khatri of Muzaffarpur, who in spite of the fierce opposition of the traditionalists, had the times and the new generation on his side. Ayodhya Prasad Khatri was an indefatigable missionary in the cause of 'Khari-Boli'. While still quite young he printed a pamphlet entitled *Khari-Boli Andolana* and distributed it free of cost. His most significant work was the compilation of an anthology of poems in 'Khari-Boli'. It was printed in England and Henry Piacot, an eminent orientalist, wrote a preface to it. The subsequent period of Hindi literature, in which Vrajabhāshā was gradually replaced by 'Khari-Boli' in Hindi poetry, is deeply indebted to the pioneering done in Bihar.

When poetry began to be written the new way, Chandraśekharadhara Miśra, Raghuvira Narayana, Ramadahina Miśra, and many others in Bihar practised it enthusiastically. During the subsequent

phase of Romanticism and nationalism, Mohanalal Mahato 'Viyogi', Janardana Prasada Jha 'Dvija', Prafulla Chandra Ojha 'Mukta', Ramadhari Singh 'Dinakar', Kedaranatha Miśra 'Prabhat', Keśari and Janakivallabha Śastri were the prominent Hindi poets and most of them rank high among the living poets of the language.

The Romantic poets of Bihar are indebted to the comparatively early Hindi Romanticists, or Chhāyāvādis as they were called in Hindi, such as Jayaśaṅkara 'Prasad', Suryakanta Tripathi 'Nirala' and Sumitranandan Pant, who, in their turn, and under the influence of Rabindranath Tagore, the English Romantic poets and the early mystic saint-poets of Hindi had released Hindi poetry from the rigid classical pattern. Raghuvira Narayana, the Burns of Bihar, is likely to have derived inspiration from the songs of the famous Scottish poet. He wrote English verse with competence and his Hindi poems bear the mark of originality, though they lack the finish of the poems of those of his contemporaries who had other and more polished models.

Kazi Nazrul Islam among the Bengali poets, and Iqbal and Josh among Urdu poets, along with the comparatively senior Hindi poets, Makhanalal Chaturvedi and Balakṛishṇa Śarma 'Navin', have influenced the rationalist poetry of 'Dinakar'. So full of fire and thunder, it has never failed to rouse enthusiasm even in the largest of gatherings—'Kavi-sammelanas', as they are called—assembled to hear favourite poets sing and recite their own poems.

The *avant-garde* of Hindi poetry, styled as Experimentalism—Prayogavada —took shape in Nalina Vilochana's poems written in the thirties in Bihar. While the Prayogavadis of Hindi in general have achieved little more than puerile formlessness, Nalina Vilochana, Kesari Kumara, and Naresh have boldly issued a manifesto of Prapadyavada verse *par excellence*, in which they accept the absence of external differences between poetry and prose and emphasize that experiment is the end of poetry and not merely the means.

The Prapadyavadis of Bihar have gone to the very root of Indian verse and made it sprout into such poetry as has been made possible by Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. It has naturally received no more than grudging recognition from littérateurs who fight shy of 'isms'.

MAGAZINES AND JOURNALS

The rich literary climate of Bihar owes much to the literary journalism of the State. We have already mentioned the *Bihar Bandhu*, which

was founded as early as 1872 and the publication of which remained unbroken for more than thirty years. *Vidya-Vinoda, Bhāsā Prakāśa, Dvija Patrika* and *Sarva-Hitaisi* (this being one of the earliest daily papers of Bihar), *Kshatrya-Patrika, Harischandra-Kala, Samasya Purti* and, the most important of all, *Siksha,* are some of the periodicals of this period mostly published in Patna. *Deśa, Taruna-Bharata, Mahāvira, Yuvaka, Ārati* and *Himalaya* represent the periodicals which existed at the beginning of the century and continued up to the thirties and early forties, but which are now unfortunately all defunct. *Sahitya* and *Dṛistikoṇa,* devoted to literary research and criticism, and *Nai Dhara* and *Avantika,* literary monthly journals of a general nature are contemporary journals which have played an important role in forming the taste of readers and in raising the literary standard of Hindi.

Persian Language and Literature

With the consolidation of the Moghal Empire, Persian became the language of administration, of official correspondence and records, and also of the courts of law. Hindus as well as Muslims learnt the language and the most gifted among them wrote books in it. The Persian prose and poetry produced in Bihar during the period can claim, despite its Indian imprint, to have as much of beauty, art, thought and wisdom as can be favourably compared with any produced elsewhere, even in Persia, the land of its birth.

Most of the writers of the Urdu verse of the period were of necessity scholars and poets in Persian as well; for, Urdu poetry and prose were influenced by Persian literature, and Urdu was then considered to be only a local vernacular. In the first half of the 19th century, proposals for the substitution of Hindustani for Persian as the language of judicial proceedings were turned down by the Board of the East India Company. However, in 1832, Urdu (i.e. Hindustani) took the place of Persian as the court language, so that Persian received a setback from that date. Although Urdu was recognized at Fort William College, Calcutta (established in 1800), the upper strata of society continued to use Persian even in their correspondence, and poets and writers expressed themselves in that language until the end of the nineteenth century. During the last two hundred years, Bihar has produced no less than six hundred poets and prose writers, and some of the poets of this period may be regarded as master Ghazal-writers. Meanwhile, our prose writers dealt with

a wide range of subjects and earned for themselves a recognized place in Persian literature because of the excellence of their chaste and elegant style. As Persian was the language of the ruling classes, it infiltrated imperceptibly into the local dialects, and brought about a change in ways of thought and methods of expression.

We propose now to give a very brief account of the development of the Persian language and literature during the last two hundred years. From the dim past, Bihar is known to have been the home of a very large number of scholars, philosophers, poets and prose writers. Many of them flourished during the period under review, 1757 to 1947. All these, both Hindus and Muslims, enriched the Persian language by their literary contributions and deep scholarship.

Abdul Haque, the well known traditionist (Mohad-dis), and a contemporary of Akbar, has told us that, 'Bihar was the centre of Savants' (*Anfasul Arifin*, p. 62). Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1744-1832), the celebrated religious and social reformer, educationist and founder of the Brahmo Samaj, came to Patna to study Persian and receive inspiration from the savants of this province. His well known book, in Persian, *Tohfatul-Mowah-i-Din* (a gift to unitarians) was written during his stay at Patna.

In eighteenth-century Bihar many books were written in Persian on logic, philosophy, mysticism and Muslim jurisprudence.

We can get an idea of the intellectual atmosphere of Bihar in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries from *Subhe-Sadique* and *Insha-e Ulfat*, whose learned authors, Md. Sadiq and Lala Ujagarchand 'Ulfat', acquaint us with the literary attainments of scholars, poets, prose writers, calligraphists and savants who shone in their respective spheres.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in Bihar as in the rest of India, the subjects which English boys learnt in their colleges, through Latin and Greek, the Biharis learnt through Arabic and Persian. It is a historical truth that during the Muslim rule and also in the British period, Muslims and Hindus, particularly Kayasthas, learnt and loved the Persian language and literature. Consequently we come across Hindi-Persian verses composed by the early poets of this period. What is true of India holds good for Bihar also. R. B. Saxena says that 'the preponderance of Persian words in the writings of early Hindi poets is astonishing.' As far back as the fourteenth century, Maithili scholars and authors have used many

Persian and Arabic words, as, for instance :— Peyaz (onion), Muza (sock), Tir (arrow), Tahsil (revenue), Ohda (post), Swara (a horseman), Pik Dani (spittoon), Hazar (thousand), Mukallal (ornamented), and so on.

For the development of the Persian language and literature in our period also, as in the preceding ages, several schools of poets and scholars, like the one founded by Raja Peyor-e-Lal 'Ulfati', were set up in different parts of Bihar; magnificent libraries of Arabic and Persian books were started by scholars and rulers, and numerous madrasas at places such as Phulwari Sharif, Maner Sharif, Bihar Sharif, Barh and Rajgir, were founded, in which every student used to read a number of Persian books on literature, romance and history. Those who stopped at this stage were given the title of Munshi. Others who continued their studies and learnt Arabic, were given the title of Maulana, Moulavi or Fazil, according to their standard of learning.

The main factors which developed the Persian language and literature in Bihar during the earlier part of our period were the madrasas with or without boarding houses, well-equipped libraries, the patronage of wealthy people, the popularity of the language on account of its simplicity, ease and sweetness, the encouragement given by Muslim rulers and British governors and the use of that language in correspondence and in legal documents. Till very recent years, books on medicine were read and written in Persian and the Unani physicians (Hakims), write their prescriptions in Persian to this day.

During the period under review, hundreds of poets and prose writers of a high standard flourished in Bihar. Of these scholars who were born or settled in Bihar, mention can only be made of a few outstanding names.

The first Persian poet and patron of learning of our period was Raja Ram Narayan, 'Mawzoon' (*d.* 1764). The son of Rang Lal, a Srivastava Kayastha of Kishanpur (Shahabad), he rose by dint of sheer merit from a clerk to being Divan and Naib Nazim of Bihar. He was a brave and chivalrous man, an able ruler and a man of letters. We may reckon him among the master Ghazal-writers and his Diwan (collection of Ghazals) is an admirable piece of work. His brother, Dhiraj Narayan also wrote in Persian, and both had been given their poetic names (Takhallus) by the celebrated Persian poet, Shaikh Ali Hazin.

The great Sufi saint and writer of the late eighteenth century, Shah Mohammad Mun'am (*d.* 1771) of the village of Pachna (Monghyr), who spent his last days in the mosque of Mulla Mitan, Patna city, is the author of two books, *Ilhamat-e-Munami* and *Mokashafat-e-Munami*, both of which are steeped in mysticism.

The next to deserve notice is Sayyid Gholam Husain Shorish (*d.* 1778), the author of *Tadhkera-e-Shorish*, which is written in Persian and contains 314 short biographies with extracts, and a Diwan (collection of Ghazals), of about 400 verses many of which deal with mysticism.

Another Sufi writer of the period, the author of many books on ethics and mysticism, was Mulla Wahidul Haq 'Abdal' (*d.* 1785), of Phulwari Sharif (Patna).

The greatest spiritual leader of his time in Bihar was Rukn-ud-dīn, 'Ishq' (*d.* 1788). He is the author of many standard books on ethics and mysticism.

'Abdullah' Ta'id' (*d.* 1791) of Patna, the author of *Reyadul Munshaat*, a collection of letters addressed to leading Amirs, eminent persons, and high officials has also left a Diwan of Persian verses.

A well known figure of the period is 'Ali Ibrāhim Khan, 'Khalil', who married the grand-daughter of Nawab Sarfraz Khan of Bengal. A native of Patna, he died in 1793. His book, *Kholasatul-Kalam*, contains biographical notices of Persian Mathnavi-writers. He is also the author of many other well known books, *Gulzar-e-Ibrāhim* (containing biographical notices of Rekhta-writers); *Suhuf-e-Ibrāhim* (containing biographical sketches of Persian poets), a history of the Mahratta Wars and so on. His letters, collected by his nephew, Yahya Ali, and preserved in the British Museum, throw much light on the political and social conditions in the Bihar of his time. Mohammad Ali Tamanna, the son of Abdullah Taid, was also the author of a book, *Mansoorat*, which is a vast collection of letters, elegant prose pieces and writings of eminent authors. Mohammad Ali 'Tamanna' was known for his neat prose and excellent poems. According to the author of *Nashtar-e-'Ishq*, Mir Mohammad (*d.* 1801) belonged to Azimabad. His pen-name was 'Reda'. He had received his early education from Mir Deya-ud-dīn of Shahjahanabad (Delhi). He was well versed in Arabic grammar and was a good Urdu and Persian poet. His Persian Diwan is preserved in the Oriental Public Library, Patna. Maharaja Kalyan Singh, 'Ashiq', (*d.* 1812), the son of the great patron of learning, Maharaja

Shitab Rai, and himself a Naib Nazim of Bihar in the later eighteenth century, was the author of numerous books, some of which have come down to us. Among these are :—*Kholasatul Tawārikh*, a history; *Jadidus-Seyar*, a versified history of early Islam; *Tarikh-e-Zeba*, a voluminous versified romance; and a collection of laudatory poems in praise of holy Imams. A Qasida in which he denies that he had given up his Hindu faith begins with the line:— 'Hinduam, Kafir nazhadam, man Musalma (n) nistam' (I am a Hindu, the son of a Hindu, and I have not embraced Islam). Khair-ud-dīn in his book, *Tuhfa-i-Taza*, has referred to an interesting interview with him.

Hakim Farhatullah Farooqi (*d.* 1813) of Karim Chak (Chapra), the author of *Resala-e-Murshidiya*, was a well known figure of North Bihar at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Nurul Haq 'Tapan', (*d.* 1817) of Phulwari Sharif, the author of *Anwar-ut-Tariqat* and of other books on the rites and religious usages observed by those who belong to the Mojibiya section of the 'Qadriya' order, was also a good poet and calligraphist. His two Diwans, written in his own hand, are preserved in the Khanqah of Mangal Talab (Patna city). Hasan Quli Khan, son of Aqa Ali Khan, was a native of Patna. He is well known for his very useful book *Nashtar-e-'Ishq* (completed in 1817). This biography of poets, complete in two volumes, contains 1470 notices arranged in alphabetical order. Bibi Rawshan, (*d.* 1831) of Phulwari Sharif, was a poetess, and an Arabic and Persian scholar, who was known for her versatile genius. Her knowledge of Sanskrit, which she had learnt from the wife of a pandit, was also considerable. Her Persian and Urdu works are preserved in the library of the Khanqah of Phulwari Sharif. The opening couplet of one of her Persian Ghazals,

'Ba dil juz didan-e-ruyat digar hasrat na-mi daram,
Wa le peshe to Sar bardaram i (n) himmat na-mi daram.'

(Though my heart harbours no desire save to look on thy face, in thy presence I dare not lift my eyes to see you).

Amin Ahmad, 'Thabat', of Bihar Sharif, one of the very best Mathnavi writers of the period, was born in 1832. He has written a number of Mathnavis in Persian, all of which have been published, in praise of the glorious deeds of religious persons. He has also left a collection of Persian verses. According to the

compiler of *Jame-i-Bahadur Khani*, an encyclopædic work on mathematics and other sciences in Persian (begun in 1832 and completed in 1833), Raja Mitrajit Singh of Tekari, who flourished thirty years before the Indian War of Independence of 1857, was an Arabic and Persian scholar who was 'conversant with all branches of knowledge.' *Jame-i-Bahadur Khani* was written at the request of the Raja himself and dedicated to him. Maulana Ahmadi (1763-1835), son of Mulla Wahidul Haq 'Abdal' of Phulwari Sharif, wrote many treatises on a variety of subjects and a number of commentaries on existing scientific books. In 1793 he was appointed Mufti of the judicial courts of Saran, Shahabad and Gorakhpur. Sayyid Shah Ghulam Husain (*d.* 1842), son of Shah Amirullah, of the village of Bitho (Patna), was the author of a Mathnavi, known as *Karistan-e-Ishq*. His Diwan contains nearly twelve thousand Persian verses. Anwar Ali Yas (1789-1845) of Arrah was a great scholar of Arabic and Persian, and wrote verses in both Persian and Urdu. He is also known to have been a fine musician and a very good sitar player. Sayyid Mohammad 'Askari', son of Sayyid Khurshid Ali Bilgrami, who was a close friend of Anwar Ali, 'Yas' of Arrah, was a very good poet in Persian and Urdu, and a well known prose writer. Among his many books, *Sahaif-Ush-Shara-if*, containing biographies of writers, is well known and much appreciated. Shah Abul Hasan 'Fard' (1771-1848) of Phulwari Sharif, son of Shah Mohammad Nematullah (1747-1831), was a very great scholar in Arabic and Persian and a poet whose compositions are known for their artistic worth. Wazir Ali 'Ibrati' (born at Patna) a contemporary of Mirza Ghalib (*d.* 1896) was the author of the useful *Reyadul-Afkar* (compiled in 1852). Peyare-Lal, *Ulfati*, was a noted Persian poet and a very cultured man, who possessed a large and magnificent library. He created a school of poets who adopted pen-names in honour of their 'Guru', such as 'Wahshati', 'Mehnati', 'Ibrati', and 'Furqati'. Shaikh Mohammad Wajihuddin, 'Ishqi', of Azimabad was a scholar and a popular Persian poet. Garicin de Tassy has based his *Tadhkera* on the biographies of Rekhta poets as written by 'Ishqi'. Safir Bilgrami (1833-89), of the village of Koath (Shahabad) was a prolific writer, and a standard poet in Persian and Urdu. A contemporary of Ghalib, he was the author of three Diwans of Persian Ghazals, several Persian Mathnavis, a biography of Urdu poets and a novel, *Rooh Afza*.

Of the many scholars and writers of the 13th century Hijra

(i.e. 18th century A.D.), we can only refer to those whose works are of outstanding merit and high literary value.

Shah Mohammad Said 'Hasrat' (*d.* 1886) of Patna, the author of a number of books such as *Qistasul-Balaghat, Maqsadul Balaghat, Kitabut-Tawarikh* and so on, was also a Persian poet. Liyaqat Ali Khan 'Aish' (*d.* 1898) of Gaya, a good poet in Persian and Urdu, was the author of a Mathnavi named *Rumuz-e-'Ishq* and a Persian Diwan. Sayyid Abu Mohammad Khaliluddin Husain, alias Shah Ferzand Ali Sufi (1832-1900), was the author of the well known Persian book, *Wasila-tush-Sharaf*. In addition to his Urdu and Persian Diwans, his well known books are the Mathnavis *Rawish-i-'Ishq, Kashish-e-'Ishq*, and *Liwa'-e-Ahmad*. Hakim Abdul Hamid 'Parishan' (1829-1905) of Patna, ranks as a genius. Besides being a good physician, he was a learned poet composing verses freely in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. He is also the author of many Mathnavis, four of which have come down to us. Maulana Sayyid Mazhar Hasan 'Mazhar', (*d.* 1901), belonged to the village of Hasanpura (Saran). He was a good Mathnavi writer and a lyric poet, whose Mathnavi, *Nan-e-Khushk*, is in a remarkably pure and delicate style. He composed verses both in Persian and Urdu. His collected works are known as *Daftar-e-Abtar*.

Although Persian remained the language of administration for about two hundred years and was used by Indian lawyers, traders, writers, poets and students, both Hindu and Muslim, it never became the popular spoken language of the country, much less of Bihar. Persian, 'the language of chivalry, war and love' as described by Dr Saxena, had always been liked for its 'simplicity, sweetness and striking effect'. Many young Hindus and Muslims, learnt Persian in their schools and colleges, because it helped them to attain proficiency in Urdu, which had gradually become the language of culture and refinement. Even in these days, we find Dr Saxena observing in his presidential address on the 'Barq-Day' celebrations of 20 April 1956 in Delhi, that 'Urdu is the language of the common people, "janata", and it is a monumental symbol of Hindu-Muslim Unity.'

Urdu Language and Literature

It is evident from *Subh-e-Sadiq*, that by the time of Jehangir, Patna had become a resort of poets and scholars, including some from other countries. During the régime of the cultured Irani governor

of Bihar under Shah Jahan, the mosque and Madrasa of Saif Khan, were nurseries of talented and scholarly people. Under Aurangzeb, the area round Patna supplied private tutors to Delhi princes, and Mirza 'Fitrat' and 'Abdul Qadir Bedil' passed many years in the Subah, shedding their literary lustre throughout the province. The importance of Patna as a cultural centre increased when Azimush-Shan set up court there and by an Imperial Firman, the town became known as Azimabad. Farrukh Seyar who was crowned at Patna, and Husain Ali Khan, the younger of the Sayyed brothers, the king-makers, who helped him to the Imperial throne of Delhi, added to the grandeur and glory of the capital of the province. The repeated revolutions in Delhi and the prevailing unrest in Western India stimulated the influx of learned people into the subah of Bihar, and the unceasing flow of immigrants gave a fresh stimulus to the intellectual life of the province. For about four decades Patna was a haven of refuge and Azimabad became Delhi in miniature. Not only Patna but a large number of towns all over the lower Gangetic valley, as far as Murshidabad and Dacca, received a sprinkling of this Delhi influx.

We give below a brief account of the development of the Urdu language and literature in Bihar from the eighteenth century onwards.

It is an admitted fact that Urdu has its origin in Sauraseni Prākṛit. In its early stages, Bihari Urdu, like Deccani and Delhi Urdu, retained in its grammar, vocabulary and the structure of its sentences, the characteristic features of its origin. The language used by the poets and prose writers was simple, being free from unfamiliar Persian, and uncouth Arabic words. The authors wrote as they spoke. The subject-matter of poems and tracts written in Urdu were mostly canons of religion and mystic philosophy, praises of Allah and of the Holy Prophet of Islām, or the tragedy of Kerbala.

The poets and scholars who migrated to Bihar from upper India were largely responsible for creating a love for poetry, and for literary and social gatherings (Moshaeras), to which lovers and patrons of Urdu flocked. These Moshaeras were of great importance in the development and refinement of Urdu and the printing and publishing of 'Guldastā' (collection of poems recited in the Moshaeras) as time went on, helped towards its growth and popularity.

Slowly but steadily Urdu found its way into Maktabs and Madrasas, where Urdu primers were introduced and Urdu didactic

poems were taught to the young boys and girls. Urdu was also used as the medium of instruction. It thus became a popular language. Scholars enriched its vocabulary and poets and prose writers gave it rhythm and flexibility. Urdu continued to grow in Bihar as a rich living language, suitable alike for the expression of the subtleties of the philosopher and the mystic, the imagination of the poet, the lucidity of the scientist, historian or annalist. As a consequence, Persian gradually lost its place in poetry, sermon, discourse or disquisition, and even in public or private correspondence.

Before the struggle of 1857, Urdu prose and poetry were simple in form and vocabulary, but soon afterwards, religious, social and political movements brought about a change. There was a congenial atmosphere for the growth of Urdu language and literature and it prospered. The sweeter and more suitable Hindi, Persian and Arabic words commended themselves to authors and the scope of subjects dealt with by Urdu authors widened considerably. Poetical works such as Mathnavis (descriptive poems), Merthias (dirges), prose works on history, biography, music, mathematics, mysticism, medicine and religion, were written in Urdu by the scholars of Bihar. In the nineteenth century, on account of the more settled conditions, the educational system established by the British and the foundation of well-equipped madrasas by patrons of learning, good books on fine arts and on serious topics were written in Urdu, both by Hindus and Muslims.

In the twentieth century, Urdu in Bihar has attained an enviable position amongst the numerous languages of India. Many Bihari writers and poets of this period have been ranked by critics with the great writers of upper India. The literary productions, books on criticism, historical and biographical writing, philosophical books, short stories, dramas and novels, have confirmed the hopes entertained by Vincent Smith that, 'the Urdu language which resembles English in the simplicity and flexibility of its syntax and in the extraordinary wealth of its vocabulary drawn from Western Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, English and other sources, should be capable of expressing ideas on any subject, literary, philosophical and scientific.'

In recent years, many English, American, Russian, Sanskrit, Hindi and Bengali books and poems have been translated or adapted into Urdu and these translations or adaptations have completely revolutionized the style of Urdu poets and prose writers.

Numerous institutions have been started all over Bihar by the Urdu-speaking public. Many schools and colleges, such as 'Anjuman-e-Traqqi Urdu', 'Daera-e-Adab', 'Bazm-e-Adab', 'Bazm-e-Sukhan' and others have been working in recent years with the main object of spreading Urdu literature and propagating the Urdu language.

The Urdu printing and publishing concerns and the newspapers of the period have influenced the growth of the Urdu language and literature on quite different lines from those of the preceding decades, for, ideas of national and political freedom have found adequate expression in the writings of the authors of this period.

This is, in brief, a general survey of the progress of the Urdu language and literature in Bihar during the period under review. The succeeding paragraphs will be devoted to a very short account of some of the most important poets and authors who flourished between 1757 and 1947.

The first typical Bihari poet whose work has come down to us is 'Dildār' of Arrah, who composed his short, delicate, ethical and mystical poems soon after becoming a disciple of the celebrated Phulwari saint, Shah Mojibullah, in 1735 (1148 A.H.), when he was already seventy years of age :—

(*a*) 'Geyarah Sai artalis me (n) ham guru ka daman pakra,
Har ek tarah ke hirs-o-hawa se man ko apne jakra.

(*b*) Sattar se (n) sin zeyada (h) guzra, ab kaho keya karna hai?
Ghaflat me (n) guzre ya (h) din, Dildar, ab age marna ahi.'

(*a*) 'In 1148 A.H. I attached myself to my Guru; and refrained from all kinds of desire and greed.

(*b*) I am more than seventy, now tell me what I should do? O' 'Dildār'! All these years have passed in sloth and there is death ahead.'

An even more learned and saintly scholar-poet of Phulwari Sharif, was Shah Ayatullah who wrote under three pen-names— 'Shorish' in Persian, 'Jawhari' in Rekhta or Urdu, and 'Dhawqi' in Urdu Merthia (or dirge). Perhaps his best and longest work in Urdu is his Mathnavi, *Gawhar-e-Jawhari*, composed in 1747. This is a remarkable achievement. Another shining Patna luminary, Mīr Gholam Husain Shorish (*d.* 1778), wrote literary criticism and biographical accounts of Urdu poets. It is obvious that literature must have been rich enough and sufficiently refined to encourage the undertaking of such a task. Another work in Persian,

Tadhkera-i-Gulzar-i-Ibrāhīm, by a Patna historian, contains biographical sketches of many Urdu poets of Bihar.

The less known, but valuable *Tadhkera-i-Ishqi*, by Shaikh Mohammad Wajih-Uddin, 'Ishqi' of Patna, contains biographies of the Urdu poets of the whole of India, including as many as seventy belonging to Patna.

Among the host of poets and authors who flourished in Bihar in the latter half of the eighteenth century and whose Urdu Diwans (collection of poems), Mathnavis or other works in Persian and Urdu have survived, mention can only be made of a few:— Mohammad Rawshan 'Joshish', a contemporary of Mīr Hasan of Delhi, a very good musician and sitar player, and Mohammad 'Abid' and 'Dil', both sons of Raja Jaswant Rao Nagar; Kamal Ali 'Kamal' of Deora, in the Gaya district, (*d.* 1800); Mohammad Reda, son of Mir Jamaluddin Husasin, of Patna (*d.* 1801); Haibat Quli Khan 'Hasrat' (*d.* 1795); Mir Mohammad Baqar 'Hazin'; Shaikh Gholam Yahya 'Hudoor' of Patna, son of Shah Mohammad Mazhar, Mirza Mohammad Ali 'Fidwi', alias Mirza Bhachchoo, who, according to the author of *Gulzar-i-Ibrāhīm*, came to Patna from Delhi and finally settled and died there; Mīr Deyauddin 'Deya', a contemporary of the famous Urdu satirist, Sawda; Shah Noorul Haq 'Tapan' (*b.* 1743 *d.* 1817) of Phulwari Sharif; and Shah Ruknuddin, 'Ishq' alias Shah Ghasita (*d.* 1788) whose Diwan consisting of 800 odes, is available in the library of Khanqah, Phulwari. The last-named is also the author of some Sufistic treatises.

The list should include Talib Ali Talib, a younger brother of 'Rasikh', and Ashraf Ali Khan 'Foghan'. Though Foghan was from Delhi, he settled in Patna, where he was buried just outside Sher Shah's mosque in Patna city. Urdu poetry attained a very high level at the hands of another son of Bihar, Gholam Ali Rasikh (1748-1822), who expressed his sublime thoughts in enduring poetry such as:—

(*a*) 'Mujhe saw (n) p dagh-e-firaq de, hue yo (n) juda ke na phir mile,
Mere dil me (n) ta dam-e-wapsi (n), wo (h) amanat unkidhari rahi.

(*b*) Nahi (n) hosh walo (n) pa kuchh hasad, mujhe rashk hai to unho pe hai,
Jinhe (n) tere jalwa ke samne, meri tarha be-khabari rahi.'

(*a*) She (the object of my love) left me for ever, bequeathing unto me the scar of separation which I nursed as a sacred trust till

my last breath. (*b*) I feel jealous of those who, like me, are overwhelmed in your presence, but not of those who do not lose themselves and retain their individuality (i.e. fail to respond in the same way).

The literary output of some of the poets who wrote contemporaneously with Mīr and Sawda can be compared with that of the classical poets of Delhi and Lucknow. The patronage of rulers and nobles such as Nawab Haibat Jung, Raja Ram Narayan 'Mowzoon', Raja Shitab Rai, Maharaja Kalyan Singh 'Ashiq', favoured learning and fostered culture. The frequent holding of Moshaeras which were at once forum, theatre, publishing agency and a passport for employment, and the comparative security and prosperity of the province above all, led, as never before, to the development of Urdu. Though the taste for, and the cultivation of, Urdu poetry was not confined to urban areas or to the higher classes, refined Urdu came to be regarded as the language of polite society. Prose failed to keep pace with poetry and Persian was still the medium of composition. Even formal letter-writing was done in Persian by the higher and educated classes. But the Moshaera had taken root and become entirely vernacularized. The Moshaera is, or until recently was, an institution peculiar to Urdu. It had been introduced into Urdu under the influence of the Persian nobles and poets. But so well was it suited to the genius of the time, the men and the language, that once introduced, it eclipsed every other form of literary activity.

As time went on, the literary climate continued to flourish with fresh vigour and to present various new features. Among the famous Urdu poets of the nineteenth century, it suffices to mention the names of only a few such as Syed Shah Amiruddin, 'Wajd' of Bihar Sharif (1798-1870); Anwar Ali, 'Yas' of Arrah, painter, musician and artist, pupil of Rasikh (*d.* 1845); Mokarram Ali Khan, 'Makarram', a contemporary of the well known Urdu poet Ghalib; Syed Shah Ulfat Husain, 'Faryad' (*b.* 1804); Shah Gholam Murtada, 'Junoon' of Sasaram; Shah Abul Hasan, 'Fard' of Phulwari Sharif (1777-1848); Maulavi Ahmad Kabir, 'Hairat' (1777) and Mir Monawwar, 'Hairan', a disciple of Joshish. That Urdu began to find a place in correspondence long before the standard work of Ghalib saw the light of day, is evident from the letters that Shah Hasan Ali of Mitan Ghat, Patna, wrote to his disciple, Shah Farhatullah 'Farhat' of Karim Chak (Chapra). He is addressed as 'Hasan Dost'; one of the letters begins thus, 'Hasan Dost Ko Asis'.

Another great name in scholarship is that of Syed Farsad Ahmad 'Safir' Bilgrami (1833-89). He was born at Marehra but came to Bihar with his father, Syed Abdul Hai and settled in Arrah :—

'Mawlid-o-maskan, watan hai ai Safir!
Tin ja-Marehra, Arrah, Bilgram.'

(O Safir! three places Marehra, Arrah and Bilgram respectively are my birthplace, dwelling place and my native town). He was a prolific writer and has left behind no less than seven or eight Diwans. His novels, biographies of prophets and Imams and his Tadhkeras of Urdu poets, give him a high position in Urdu literature. Another important man of the Bilgrami family who settled in Bihar, was Syed Awlad Haider 'Fawq' Bilgrami (*b.* 1870). He composed twenty-seven thousand verses in Persian and Urdu. In prose also he wrote no less than two dozen books on a variety of interesting subjects. His life of Mohammad alone is in six large volumes. He also wrote the lives of the twelve Imams and of Fatima Zahra.

Perhaps the most outstanding poet and prose writer of the period was Mir Syed Ali Mohammad Shad of Azimabad (*b.* 1846). He was a towering figure of all-India fame and his romances and novels can stand comparison with any work produced contemporaneously When we compare the poetical output of 'Dildār' of the mid-eighteenth century with that of Shad, Fard, Shawq Nimvi and Fadl-e-Haq 'Azad' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, we find a world of difference in thought, style and expression. A high order of poetry, simple but faultless, chaste in diction and sublime in thought, is reflected in the following lines of Shad:—

'Tamannao (n) me(n) uljhaya geya hu (n),
Khelawne deke bahlaya geya hu (n).
Tu dil se puchh le ai rawnaq-e-bazm,
Mai (n) khud aya nahi (n), lay geya hu (n).
Na tha mai (n) mutaqid ejaz-e-mai ka,
Bari mushkil se manwaya geya hu (n).
Lahad me (n) keyo (n) na jau (n) mu (n)h chhupa e,
Bhari mahfil se uthwaya geya hu (n).'

(I have been enmeshed in aspirations and (thus) I have been beguiled with toys. O Light of the assembly! Ask thy heart, did I come of my own will, or have been drawn hither. I had no faith in the fabled miracle of wine, but I have been forced to believe in it. I have been put to shame and have been driven away from your full assembly; why should I not then go to my grave with my face covered?)

The first Bihari poet of note of this period who departed from the prevailing vogue of the Ghazal and introduced natural and national poems in Urdu was Fadl-e-Haq 'Azad' of Shaho Bigha, a small village in the district of Gaya.

The greatest Mathnavi-writer of Bihar who flourished during the period was Syed Shah Amin Ahmad (1832-1903), whose pen-name in Urdu was 'Thabat' and in Persian 'Shawq'. But his Urdu Mathnavi is not available now. Maulana Abdul Haq 'Anjum' of Shaikpura was an efficient prose writer of the period who was responsible for critical studies of Ghazal which were recited in the Moshaeras conveyed by Sukh Raj Bahadur 'Rahmati' and published in 1878.

Syed Shah Mohammad Akbar (1844-1909), was one of the most prolific writers of his age. He produced a large number of treatises on different topics and has left many good Mathnavis, all of which are interesting and readable. He has also left two Urdu Diwans. Abdul Ghafoor Shahbaz (1857-1908), was a resident of Sar Mehri, a small village in the district of Patna. He was a copious writer, a very good poet, and a standard prose writer. His best-known book is *Zin-dagani-i-be-Nazir*, which is an authentic biography of the poet Nazir Akbarabadi and a review of his poetry. Jalaluddin Khan 'Tathir' a descendant of Lutfullah Khan Sadiq, a Delhi Munshi, was a good poet in Urdu and a prominent figure of his time.

Among the prose writers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the name of 'Azizuddin Balkhi (*b.* 1881), the author of *Tarikh-i-Shoara-i-Bihar*, should not escape notice for he has written many booklets on various subjects.

Bihar is justly proud of one of the great twentieth-century scholars of Arabic, Persian and Urdu, Maulānā Syed Sulaiman Nadvi of Desna (*b.* 1884. *d.* 1953), a small village in the district of Patna He has not only enriched Urdu by his simple, graceful and idiomatic style, but has rendered great service to Urdu literature by popularizing Muslim culture hitherto treasured in Arabic and Persian tomes. He has written many books concerning Islamic history and is also a very good Urdu poet.

Another prolific writer of the present age, whose books and articles are always read with delight and interest, is Maulānā Manazir Ahsan of Gilani (1894-1956), a small village in the Patna district. He was a man of acknowledged scholarship and deep theological knowledge and most of his books are regarded as

valuable contributions to Urdu literature. Abul Jamal Mohammad Ahsan 'Sokhan' (*d.* 1936), though essentially a poet in Persian and Urdu, was also skilled in Hindi Bhāshā. He was one of the regular contributors to the newspaper, *Al-punch* of Patna, which was started in 1885. He enjoyed great popularity in Bihar.

It is only fair that some mention should be made of at least a few poetesses of the thirteenth century Hijra. The first name which is worth mentioning is that of Bibi Rawshan, the wife of Qadi Syed Shah Alam. She was a good Arabic and Persian scholar who also wrote verses in Urdu. She is well known for her marriage-songs, composed in simple and colloquial Hindi. These are very popular in Bihar, and are still sung. She died in 1813.

Bibi Tahera, the wife of Shah Barkatullah, was deeply versed in theology and Islamic jurisprudence and wrote many treatises on controversial religious topics, which are preserved in the Khanqah Imadiya, Patna city. She was also a good poetess in Persian and Urdu. She died in 1835.

Monirun-Nesa 'Monir' (1814-1904), daughter of Shah Enayat Hussain, was well-versed in Arabic and Persian and was a good poetess in Urdu. A collection of her works is available at the village of Jamuanwan, Patna.

Bibi Waliyya was the most celebrated woman Sufī saint of Phulwari Sharif. Her ecstatic utterances and the accounts of her revelations have been recorded in several volumes which are preserved in the library at Phulwari Sharif. She ranks high among the mystical Urdu poets. Some of her verses, on the lines of Hindi 'Dohas', are very popular. The following is an example:—

'Kawn sati tadbir banawe (n)?
Un apne kan ham ko bulawe (n);
Hadrat ki deyorhi jo pawe (n),
Sir jhuka ke a (n) kh lagawe (n).'

(What device should I adopt that 'he' may call me to himself; If ever I happen to arrive at the door of the Hadrat (Mohammad), I will bow down my head and touch it with my eyes.)

Bibi Radiyya Khatun, whose pen-name was 'Jamila', was the wife of Maulavi Khuda Bakhsh Khan, the founder of the Oriental Public Library at Patna. She composed verses both in Persian and Urdu. She has left Diwans which have not yet been published.

Since World War I, prose has kept pace with poetry and has

largely expressed itself in short compositions by living writers. Among these, the humorous stories of Anjum Manpuri are easily the best. Sohail Azimabadi and Ilyas Islampuri, have made successful studies of village life and humble society. Akbar Orainvi is quite well known and has produced some very fine tales.

A very valuable contribution to historical literature has been made by Sabahuddin Abdur Rahman (*d.* 1912) of Desna. But the most distinctive contributions in the realm of biographical and literary criticism have been made by 'Qadi Abdul Wadud' (barrister) and Principal Kalimuddin Ahmad, who have introduced the most modern and latest methods of western criticism into Urdu.

The Second World War has not changed either the spirit of our poets or the nature of the content of their poems, nor does it seem to have influenced our fiction. The poets and writers are all those who had been writing before. Their present mood and spirit, socialistic or communistic or progressive is due to the impact of events during the decades between two wars. These decades have undoubtedly been very creative, both in the sense of providing a fresh impulse and of influencing the mass of literature produced. This has been so in all directions, including that of the traditional Ghazal, which in the hands of writers like Dr 'Azimuddin Ahmad', 'Ijteba Hussain Ridvi', 'Parvez Shahidi', 'Bedil', 'Radi', 'Jamil Mazhari', 'Ata Kakwi', 'Wali Kakwi', has almost burst the earlier narrow conventional limits of its themes and contents. In Urdu journalism also, Bihar did not lag behind other provinces. Not only standard quarterly, monthly and weekly magazines and journals but also daily newspapers, began to be published in 1850 and thereabout, in Patna, Muzaffarpur, Gaya, Arrah, Chapra, Bihar Sharif, Khujwa (Saran), and so on.

A book by Syed Mohammad Ashraf, published in 1881 at Lucknow, contains a list of the periodicals and papers appearing in different parts of India. Those dailies, weeklies, and monthly and quarterly journals that were issued specifically in Bihar played an important part in India. Patna, Muzaffarpur and Arrah made the largest contribution in this respect. There is at least one monthly magazine, *Islah*, which deals largely with religious and sectarian subjects; it was started in Patna at the end of the last century and has continued to be issued for the last fifty years from a village (Khujwa, Saran district), which is fifteen miles from the nearest railway station.

D. Economic Conditions

The hundred and ninety years covered by this period may be grouped into four distinct sub-periods, namely, (*i*) 1757-1833; (*ii*) 1833-58; (*iii*) 1858-1911 and (*iv*) 1911-47. The first half of the period may be said on the whole to have been one of economic setback rather than of progress, though there were during that epoch such important developments as the production of semi-manufactured goods, and the consequent expansion of foreign trade. During the second half, there was a more or less all-round progress, although this was for long rather slow and even unsteady. Meanwhile, the decline of the old cottage industries continued throughout the nineteenth century, and comparatively new ones, such as the manufacture of indigo in Bihar were, by its close, all but dead. The economic progress of our country during the first half of the present century, was, for obvious reasons, more marked than in the preceding fifty years. But the First World War, and the acute economic depression of 1930, followed by the Second World War, to mention some of the more important factors, arrested development from time to time though the wars ultimately proved conducive to economic expansion. Then, the fact that India's destiny lay in the hands of an alien government throughout the period, prevented a fuller development of the country than was possible and desirable, and kept her industrially backward in comparison with the countries of the West. This brief general outline will serve as a background to the topic under consideration.

(*i*) 1757-1833

The political ascendancy of the English on account of the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, did not bring about any immediate major change in the economic life of the people of these provinces. However, there was a rapid growth of abuses in internal trade due to the unauthorized use by the Company's servants of the Company's dastaks or passes for their private trade. The effects of this evil were also felt in Bihar. At the end of 1757, the Company obtained from Nawab Mīr Jafar the monopoly of the saltpetre trade in Bihar which eventually benefited them a great deal. During the years 1765-72, Bihar was a victim of double government, on account of which the tenantry suffered grievous exploitation at the hands of the revenue-collecting agents. But conditions in this province were somewhat better than those in Bengal, the bordering areas of which

were infested by freebooters, gangs of robbers and Sanyāsī groups. The great famine of 1769-70 however, had more devastating effects in Bihar than in the sister province, and the eastern districts of Bhagalpur, Purnea and Darbhanga, sustained appreciable injury from the scarcity. Normal economic life in the rest of Bihar does not appear to have been seriously dislocated. Moreover, the establishment of a stable government after 1771 created somewhat favourable conditions for the peaceful pursuit of industries and trade in Bihar. The distance of the province from the capital and its makeshift revenue arrangements, were largely responsible for heavy arrears in collections for a considerable number of years. Added to that, the almost continuous outflow of precious metals from this area, as also from Bengal, must have resulted in a steady impoverishment of the masses, apart from its depressing effects on the currency of the province.

From the point of view of industries, the first fifty years of this period were on the whole, a fairly flourishing period. In Bihar, as in the rest of India, the cotton textile industry was then the most widespread. It was organized on a cottage basis, every weaver's home being a little workshop. The industry as a whole employed a good proportion of the population and enabled many to supplement their agricultural income by additional earnings they made from the loom. Spinning employed the largest number of persons. It was practically a monopoly of the womenfolk of all castes. According to Francis Buchanan, nearly 1,60,000 women were employed in spinning in the Shahabad district at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The estimate might be inaccurate; but even if it were approximate, the total number of women employed in this way throughout Bihar must have been nearly fifteen lakhs. The average per capita income of the spinners was no doubt very low. In the Patna and Gaya districts, three rupees and four annas was the yearly average, according to Buchanan. There were, however, many women who earned a great deal more. At any rate, the industry ensured a reasonable economic independence for the women of those days. Regarding weaving, Buchanan's information is that there were more than seven thousand weavers' houses in Shahabad and their total annual production was worth about 6,42,000 rupees. While a plantation labourer earned twenty-two rupees eight annas a year, twenty-eight rupees and twelve annas is said to have been the average yearly earning of the weavers in the Shahabad district, which, together with their agricultural

earnings, made them economically self-sufficient. The cotton industry gave employment to certain other classes of people who were engaged in sizing, bleaching, dying, printing, embroidery and so on.

The climate of Bihar being comparatively dry, the bulk of the cloth produced here was of the coarser and middling variety. Nevertheless some fine muslins were made in the Darbhanga, Purnea, Patna and Gaya districts, though these were not so fine as those of Dacca, Malda or Santipur. Besides meeting local demands, which must have been very considerable, Bihar produced an exportable surplus. Round about Patna the cloth known as chintz was produced in abundance and this was much in demand with the Portuguese and Armenian merchants. The cotton piece-goods of Bihar not only formed a regular item of the Company's investment, but were exported by the Dutch, French and Danes. All these European nations had commercial factories at Patna, that of the Danes being established in 1775. So great was the foreign demand for piece-goods until about 1787-8, that there was keen competition among these trading nations, and often there were bitter scrambles for the possession of weavers. In the Muzaffarpur Collectorate records there are some interesting documents for the years 1783-8 concerning a scandalous quarrel between the English Commercial Resident and the French Chief at Patna on the question of the employment of the weavers in Tirhut.

The Commercial Resident of Patna had jurisdiction over the whole of the area included in the present Patna and Tirhut divisions. Under him there were, besides the main factory at Patna, subordinate cloth aurungs (factory or godown) at Jahanabad, Bankipur, Arrah, Sasaram, Dumraon, Singhia, Chapra, and certain other places. There was also a bleaching factory at Sahar and minor establishments were maintained at Hajipur and elsewhere. The French factory at Patna was seized by the Company's Government in 1793 and the Dutch one in 1795, after which the Bihar trade of those countries never revived. During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, and until 1807, the Danes carried on a lucrative trade as, to a lesser extent, did the Portuguese and the Armenians.

The Indian cotton industry was not destined to survive for long the competition of British cotton manufacture by power-driven machinery. The result was that Indian cotton manufactures were speedily ousted from these markets and the Company soon had to wind up their cloth establishments all over British India, their

factories in Bihar being closed down in 1819. By 1833, the handloom cotton industry, for ages the main and most widespread industry of India, seemed 'thus for ever lost'. Another branch of the textile industry, the manufacture of fabrics with a mixture of cotton and silk, was quite important in Bihar during the period, the weavers being mostly Muhammadans, and Bhagalpur its most flourishing centre. Several varieties of mixed fabrics were woven there, of which durries, namunas, chaharkhanas and buftas were exported in considerable quantities. But towards the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the mixed cloth manufactures had suffered much the same fate as the pure cotton manufactures on account of foreign competition.

Somewhat less important than the mixed cloth manufacture was the woollen industry of the time. Coarse woollen goods, such as blankets and carpets, were made in the Patna, Gaya and Shahabad districts as well as in Purnea. Daudnagar in the Gaya district was an important centre of this industry, but Buchanan tells us that everywhere in Bengal the blankets in use were 'alleged to come from Patna.' In Purnea and Tirhut, various jute products were also made, both for local consumption and export.

Towards the close of the period the decline in the different branches of textile manufacture was sufficiently well marked. The decline of the cotton industry, in particular, produced disastrous results. Many flourishing villages were soon nearly depopulated and several hundreds of thousands of people were thrown out of work. The vast body of helpless womanhood lost its economic independence and the pressure on land increased. The tragedy was nation-wide, and, as the then Governor-General painfully observed in 1832, something 'hardly to be paralleled in the history of commerce.'

The saltpetre industry of Tirhut occupied a peculiarly important position on account of the great demand for the article in Europe, Asia and America for gunpowder manufacture. Saltpetre was also available in the present Uttar Pradesh and North Bengal, but Bihar supplied the largest quantity. As has already been seen, the Company obtained a monopoly of the saltpetre trade in Bihar at the end of 1757 and from then on there were regular exports to the United Kingdom. On the outbreak of the Anglo-French War in Europe in 1793, export to foreign countries was prohibited, except in special cases, but during the war years (1793-1815), the demand for saltpetre in Great Britain increased by such leaps and bounds

that the Company's supply in Bihar between November 1798, and October 1799, exceeded 1,50,000 maunds. Subsequently the supply was increased still further. Indeed, the Bihar saltpetre contributed not a little to British victories in the Napoleonic wars. But the actual manufacturers, the Nunias, were hardly ever well-off. They suffered great exploitation at the hands of the Company's dalals (middlemen) and gomastas (agents) and were so poorly paid that they could scarcely afford anything more than a loin-cloth by way of clothing. The Company had saltpetre factories at Fatwa in the Patna district and at Chapra, Mow and Singhia in North Bihar.

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century the sugar industry made some progress in Bihar on account of the growing demand for the Indian product in the United Kingdom, especially after the passing of the Commutation Act (1784), which greatly increased tea consumption in that country. The Company opened a sugar manufactory at Patna which was soon followed by the establishment in the Patna, Shahabad and Tirhut districts of a further number of factories by Europeans. The Dutch, for example, erected a factory at Motipur in Tirhut in 1789, and later the Danes established one at Patna. But European experiments in sugar failed for the most part because of the preferential treatment given to West Indian sugar in the British market, with the result that most of the sugar factories were either wound up in a short time or converted into indigo concerns. Indigenous sugar and gur (molasses) manufacture, however, continued to be carried on in Bihar.

Of the semi-manufactured products during this period, raw silk, indigo and opium are worth mentioning. The production of raw silk, apart from the weaving of silk fabrics which was carried on to a limited extent in Ramgarh, Bhagalpur and certain other areas, was by no means so important as in Bengal. It nevertheless made quite good progress in Purnea, where at the beginning of the nineteenth century about two thousand maunds of filature silk, valued at six lakhs of rupees, were produced annually by indigenous reelers in their own houses, besides a large quantity of country-wound silk. Silk wound in the Italian manner was called filature silk as distinguished from that reeled in the indigenous manner, which was known as country-wound silk. A notable silk-producing centre in South Bihar was Tilothu (Shahabad), from which place more than three lakhs of rupees-worth of raw silk was exported to the Maratha country on the west coast.

The manufacture of opium was a special industry of Bihar, which was the greatest producer of the drug in the world. Bihar opium was moreover, very much prized in the Far Eastern markets, particularly in China. From 1761 onwards the industry was a government monopoly which was carried on, as Holt Mackenzie observed in 1832, 'with a view to revenue, not trade'. The East India Company also had an opium agency at Ghazipur as well as temporary ones at Rangpur (North Bengal) and Malwa. But the Bihar Agency, with its headquarters at Patna and a number of subordinate factories, far exceeded the others in importance. The total supply of opium from Bihar during the year 1808-9, for example, exceeded 8,000 maunds. During the next quarter-century the supply increased still further, thus swelling the Company's revenue. But as in the case of other primary producers in Bihar, the position of the poor poppy-growers who furnished poppy juice to the Company's factories was far from enviable.

Indigo manufacture, the pioneer planting industry of the nineteenth century, owed its introduction in Bihar to Francois Grand, Collector of Tirhut, who between 1782 and 1785 erected three factories in his district. Thereafter, the number of factories increased rapidly, until in 1810 it was twenty-five. According to the Collector's report, the district, hardly ever sent less than 10,000 maunds of indigo per year to Calcutta. Indigo manufacture in Patna, Gaya and Shahabad was negligible; but in Purnea, Monghyr and Bhagalpur it was on quite a large scale. A parliamentary estimate of 1830 gives 169 as the total number of indigo factories in Bihar, which shows that the industry was widespread over this area. Though the great majority of these concerns was British, there are references in the records to Irish, German, American and Portuguese planters in North Bihar. Dwelling on the benefits of indigo manufacture, the Collector of Tirhut wrote in 1810 that thirty to forty thousand souls received their chief support from the factories in the district. But indigo had its side, which was the very unhappy relations that always subsisted between the foreign planters and the ryots.

Apart from the big key industries, many were carried on a small scale in Bihar. For example, Monghyr was called the 'miniature Birmingham of the East' because of its manufacture of guns and other iron and steel products. Excellent paper was made at Arwal in the Gaya district, and very good soaps were made in the

Patna and Gaya districts, particularly at Bihar Sharif. Likewise, glass-making was an important industry of Bhagalpur. No less important was the indigenous mining industry of Bihar. The clusters of hills extending over the Monghyr, Patna and Gaya districts and continuing further south to the hills of Chotanagpur, contained plenty of quartz, jasper, mica and crystals. But the most important mineral industry was the smelting of iron, which was carried on in Bhagalpur and the present Santhal Parganas as well as round about Ramgarh.

(*ii*) 1833-1858

By the Charter Act of 1833, the East India Company lost its right of trade in India. Accordingly the office of the Commercial Resident of Patna, was abolished in 1835. The French trade had long ceased and the Dutch had made over their factories in Bihar to the English in 1825. The Danes retained their factories for another two decades and finally handed over their possessions to the English in 1845.

The chief feature of the economic condition of the period lies in the decline of handicrafts, cotton and mixed cloth manufactures in particular, going down rapidly. British cloth and yarn, which had already flooded the Bengal market before 1833, became, on account of their cheapness, increasingly popular in Bihar during the quarter of a century under review. The result was that the indigenous cotton and mixed cloth manufacturers were severely affected by the increasing import of British fabrics.

Small-scale manufacturing industries also began to lose their position on account of the import of European manufactured goods, which first invaded the urban areas but gradually penetrated to the interior of the province. For example, the import of European iron and steel products injured not only the industry at Monghyr, but it also indirectly hit the indigenous iron-mining of Bihar.

The position of the indigo industry was on the whole stationary. Towards the end of the period there was a strong and widespread agitation against indigo in Bengal which eventually obliged the Government to appoint a commission in 1860 to enquire into the relations between the planters and the ryots. Enquiries revealed that the conduct of the Bihar planters towards the indigo ryots was comparatively less oppressive and more humane than those of Bengal. After 1836 some of the indigo concerns took to sugar manufacture, but this did not in any way affect the former industry.

Throughout the period, the opium industry retained its sound position in spite of occasional disturbances caused by the Anglo-Chinese wars, and the sugar plantation industry recorded a distinct improvement. The equalization of duties on East Indian and West Indian sugar in Great Britain in 1836 encouraged many a Western planter to come to North Bihar and establish joint-stock companies for sugar manufacture. Some of them even imported steam engines, sugar pans and other machinery from England.

The internal trade of Bengal and Bihar had for a long time past suffered on account of the levying of a variety of inland imposts by the zemindars, and of customs levies by the Company's Government. The government customs were abolished as early as 1788, and two years later the collection of a local tax was also declared illegal. By a regulation of 1800, the government customs were re-established at five principal stations, besides Calcutta, where they had already been reinstated. As a result, the merchandise was often subjected to vexatious delays and detention during transit. Transit duties were, however, finally abolished throughout the Bengal Presidency in 1836. Another factor which tended to favour the free movement of trade was the improvement of communications. Then, the suppression of the Thugs (a secret sect which believed in murder and robbery) by Lord William Bentinck went towards making the highways of commerce safer than before. During the period 1765-1800 Government had been faced with the uphill task of introducing a uniform currency in the Bengal Presidency and, at last, they were at least partially successful in putting an end to the multiplicity of coins, till, in 1835, the currency was largely stabilized and the scarcity of small coins removed.

In spite of famines, scarcity and floods, during the first half of the nineteenth century, agriculture showed some progress. The vast increase in poppy and indigo cultivation necessitated the reclamation of waste tracts and Government settled land with many invalid ex-army men, especially in North Bihar, which made further reclamation necessary. A new crop, the potato, was introduced during this period, which, on account of the innate conservatism of the people, was far from welcome in the beginning though later on it became quite popular. Very minor irrigation measures were undertaken both by the Government and the zemindars in South Bihar.

Throughout the period 1793-1833, there had been a shortage of non-agricultural labour in Bihar, and even after 1833 it was not fully

removed. There was, however, no dearth of agricultural labourers, who were generally paid a share of the crop. Those who did not receive this share were paid daily wages during the ploughing seasons in the shape of several seers of grain or an equivalent in cash. After 1813, and specially from 1833, there was a marked rise in the wages of agricultural labour, but the non-agricultural labourers, and even the agricultural labourers in indigo and sugar factories were in general poorly paid. For example, in about 1845, a cooly in a European sugar or indigo factory received four pice a day, and often less, and there are references in the records, to the employment of forced labour, not only by zemindars but by Government officials. Besides the free labourers, serfs and slaves, called golams, nafars, kamkars or molnazadas, were employed throughout Bihar, both for agricultural and domestic purposes. They were transferred from owner to owner in the open market, but on the whole were accorded fair treatment by their masters. Although slavery was declared illegal in 1843, in certain parts of Bihar it continued in various forms till a later period.

(*iii*) 1858-1911

During the half-century or so following the transfer of the administration of India from the Company to the Crown, attempts were made, both by Government and non-government agencies, for the economic betterment of Bombay, Madras, Bengal proper, and certain other areas. However, very little was done in this direction in Bihar, except that there was a revival of certain minor industries. Thus, while as many as 254 cotton mills had sprung up in India by the end of the period, none of these were started in Bihar. Similarly, although jute was grown in Purnea in fairly large quantities, and in Tirhut to some extent, no thought was given to the establishment of jute mills in these areas, nor was any sustained effort made to revive the dwindling handloom industry. The decline of silk manufacture in Bhagalpur, Gaya, Shahabad, Ramgarh and Manbhum, was so marked indeed, that after 1880 it was all but dead.

The appalling increase in the import and use of Lancashire cloth was one of the most unwelcome economic features of the period. Moreover, whatever small quantity of cotton goods was woven by the country artisans, foreign yarn began to be used for weaving. Numerous minor industries were no doubt still carried on by

indigenous artisans, and manufactures of such things as sticklac and shellac was not unimportant in Manbhum, Singhbhum and Ranchi. Soap-making, glass-making and paper manufacture had not died out even towards the end of the nineteenth century. But the survival of these small-scale industries did not so much as begin to make up for the unemployment that followed, nor for the huge economic loss sustained by the decay of the cotton industry.

During the period under review, Bihar's saltpetre trade sustained great loss owing to the coming into the market of German potash and artificial saltpetre from the nitrate deposits of South America. Opium manufacture maintained its sound position almost to the end, but in 1907 an agreement was signed with China whereby the British Government undertook to send no more opium to that country from India. Accordingly, the Bihar Opium Agency was abolished in 1910. Although, after the publication of the Indigo Commission's Report (1860), indigo manufacture rapidly declined in Bengal, in North Bihar the industry retained its position down to 1895. But the scientific, technological and industrial advances of the West spelt the doom of India's industries and economy. The success of the German experiment in manufacturing synthetic dyes in 1895 ruined the Indian indigo market, with the result that in the course of a single decade there was almost a ninety per cent drop in the production of indigo in Champaran and Muzaffarpur.

During the greater part of the period India imported a large quantity of cane-sugar from Mauritius, China and the United Kingdom, and considerable quantities of beet-sugar from Austria-Hungary and Germany. But during the six years ending with 1910-11, Java became the greatest exporter of cane-sugar to this country. The enormous import of foreign sugar prevented the development of the Indian sugar industry to the extent that between 1892-3 and 1910-11 the area under sugar-cane decreased by twenty per cent. At the end of the period, there were in the whole of British India, excluding Burma, only twenty-three sugar factories, of which nine were in Bihar.

Several dwindling industries owed their partial revitalization mainly to European enterprise during the second half of this period. For example, lac manufacture showed noticeable progress in Chotanagpur and the Santhal Parganas, and particularly in Manbhum. The epoch-making discovery of iron ore deposits in the forests of Singhbhum at the beginning of the present century pointed to a

very bright future for the Indian iron and steel industry. In 1908, about 19,000 tons of iron ore were extracted from the mines of Singhbhum. Moreover, there were iron mines in Manbhum and Palamau, and iron-smelting was an important industry of the local people. The encouragement of iron-mining also gave an indirect impetus to gun manufacture, which revived, not only at Monghyr, but at Jhalda in the Manbhum district. Among other industries, mica received attention from Europeans. But the most spectacular industrial achievement of the late nineteenth century in Bihar was in the field of coal-mining. Mining in the Jharia fields began in 1893 and soon came into close competition with that of the Raniganj fields, which had started working in 1820.

Unfortunately industrial development in Bihar, as in other parts of India, was due predominantly to the capital and enterprise of Europeans. The ownership and management of the indigo and sugar factories, and of the mines, was almost entirely in their hands. The unwillingness of Indian capitalists to invest in industrial ventures was a stumbling-block in the path of real progress. Inefficient management, want of proper technical knowledge and skill, and lack of sufficient State encouragement and sympathy, besides the fluctuating character of Indian labour, which was not as yet fully accustomed to work outside the field of agriculture, were other impediments.

Communications during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and the opening years of the twentieth, received the attention of District Boards as well as of the Government. The amount spent on road-building and road-repairing was not inconsiderable, and a good many culverts and bridges were constructed. But in North Bihar during the rainy season, the roads in many areas were almost unfit for wheeled traffic. The opening of the East Indian Railway, the main line of which passed through Bihar, however, proved singularly promising for the transport of merchandise. Before the century closed, the loop line of the E.I.R. ran along the south-eastern part of Bihar for some distance, and North Bihar was also connected by a railway running on the northern side of the Ganges. At the beginning of the present century, moreover, North and South Bihar were linked by steamer services on the river Ganges. This mitigated the hardship of travel and favoured easier transport of commodities between North and South Bihar. Highway crimes, formerly so rampant, were also largely controlled by better police arrangements.

Occasional scarcity was not infrequent during the period under review, but the memory of catastrophic famines had faded. Twice in the course of the period, in 1874 and 1897, Bihar was visited by famines. But the death-roll on those occasions was not allowed to rise to the point where calamity could assume the proportions of a disaster. Yet in spite of the absence of severe catastrophies, and any material reduction in land rents, the position of the agriculturists was by no means satisfactory. In the first place, heavy indebtedness, that bane of Indian agriculturists, kept the class in a state of perpetual depression. Secondly, the population of Bihar multiplied during the half century following 1858, while the acreage under cultivation increased to a very limited extent. This resulted in the progressive fragmentation of holdings and the consequent impoverishment of the vast body of farmers. Thirdly, the low price of cereals and the comparative dearness of non-agricultural commodities kept this class in poverty. The condition of the aboriginal population of Santhals, Kols and Mundas, was pitiable, though a great many of them possessed holdings.

If the condition of the tenantry was far from affluent, the landless labourers lived in a state little better than wretchedness. In Bihar, unlike Bengal, where at the beginning of the present century the collapse of the silk industry brought sudden ruin to large numbers of people, the impoverishment of the masses was too slow a process to be easily perceived. It was however, sure, and it was responsible during the latter half of the period for an increasing exodus of labourers to the jute mills and tea plantation areas in Bengal and Assam. Moreover, it forced many high caste Hindus and the descendants of respectable Muslims to accept menial service in the households of middle-class people for paltry remuneration.

(*iv*) 1911-1947

The announcement in December 1911, of the formation of a separate province of Bihar and Orissa, which till then had been administered jointly with Bengal, brought a spell of optimism to educated Biharis, who could now think independently about the economic rehabilitation of their province. During the early part of this period Europeans still largely controlled the industries, but Indians had begun to evince a genuine and growing interest in industrial enterprises. After the establishment of a Congress administration in the province in 1937, Europeans lost interest in Bihar

and soon afterwards began to abandon the field. The Indians who took their place and invested in industries during this period were chiefly Marwaris, Agarwals and Khatris of U.P., and also Sindhis, Bengalis and Punjabis. But on account of a number of handicaps, the chief being the war of 1914-18, there was not much progress, at least in the early years of the period.

During the decade following the formation of the province in 1912, however, there was one welcome development, namely, that the Government came forward to encourage industrial development in a number of ways. At first the encouragement came in the shape of State assistance for technical education and research. In 1920, shortly after the publication of the Industrial Commission's report, a directorate of Industries was constituted, and the control of all technical and industrial institutions was transferred to the Director. There were by this time two State-managed technical institutions in the province, the Bihar Engineering School at Patna and the Ranchi Industrial School, besides a number of other state-aided institutions. Within the next decade, the Engineering School at Patna became an Engineering College, and new institutions were opened, such as the School of Mines at Dhanbad and the Technical Institutes at Jamshedpur and Jamalpur, followed shortly by the Tirhut Technical School at Muzaffarpur. Steps were taken also to assist private enterprise, on which to a great extent depended the industrial success of the province.

The most striking achievement was registered in the iron and steel industry. The establishment of the Tata Iron and Steel Company was a landmark in the industrial history, not only of Bihar but of India as a whole. The Company had been floated in 1907, but the first plant was put into operation in 1912. In 1918, the works produced nearly 200,000 tons of pig iron and over 70,000 tons of rails. Extensions to the existing plant were carried out on an enormous scale during the next two decades, at the end of which nearly Rs 10 crores worth of iron and steel were turned out annually and various iron and steel goods were manufactured. This enabled India to replace foreign iron and steel products to that extent. The E.I.R. locomotive shops were also established early in this period at Jamalpur and by 1920 they employed over 10,000 men. The next considerable progress was made in the coal-mining industry. As early as 1913, the Jharia coal-fields afforded employment to more than 71,000 persons. The total coal production of Bihar and

Orissa amounted in 1918 to 1,36,79,080 tons, or nearly two-thirds of the total Indian output. New fields began to be worked around Jharia, and the coal industry attracted Indian capitalists. Another industry which recorded marked progress was mica-mining. By 1915, there were over forty mines in the Hazaribagh district with a total labour strength of 10,000, besides several others in the districts of Gaya and Monghyr. The Bihar mica of the ruby variety, regarded as the finest in the world, and indispensable to electrical industries for its dielectric value, soon captured the world market, so that by the end of the period the industry was well established.

Paradoxically enough the First World War both helped and hindered the economic progress of India. The outbreak of hostilities in 1914 practically closed the markets of the world to German synthetic dyes and revived the foreign demand for Indian indigo. The result was that several factories in Tirhut which had abandoned indigo planting began the cultivation anew. Indigo was manufactured more or less all over North Bihar, but especially in Champaran and Muzaffarpur. In 1917, therewere twenty-four concerns in Champaran which manufactured indigo. But the ungenerous treatment of the indigo ryots by the European planters in Champaran led to the intervention of Mahatma Gandhi, followed by an official enquiry, which put an end to many of the evil practices in the factories. Nevertheless indigo production survived in North Bihar for at least another two decades. As, however, the product again lost the foreign market, and the planters felt unable to carry on in the new set-up after 1937, the industry soon died out. Quite different was the case with sugar. The acreage under sugar-cane fell noticeably during the war years (1914-18) due apparently to a good proportion of the land being transferred to indigo. But after 1920, there was a swing of the pendulum. By 1922, the sugar industry was fairly well-established in Bihar, which was third in sugar production in India. Progress during the next quarter of a century was on the whole satisfactory. It could be accounted for by the starting, among other factors, of cane-growers' co-operative societies in the province. Towards the close of the period there were nearly thirty sugar factories in Bihar, the great majority being situated in the Tirhut Division. The First World War also gave a certain incentive to saltpetre manufacture. The production of refined saltpetre in Bihar thus rose from 1,85,373 maunds in 1913-14 to 2,30,431

maunds in 1917-18. But the cessation of hostilities led again to a drop in production.

The war, moreover, reduced cloth imports from the United Kingdom and indirectly gave an impetus to the languishing handloom cotton industry of the province. Handloom cloth manufacture, however, received real encouragement after the war from Gandhiji's ardent support of hand-spinning and his non-co-operation and civil disobedience movements. Khadi was actively patronized by the Congress, and before long Khadi Bhandars were opened in all important centres. The wearing of Khaddar became a fashion with many people, and Khadi exhibitions were held at frequent intervals. All this gave a new lease of life to an otherwise dying industry. Government also offered assistance to the industry by starting the Bihar Cottage Industries at Gulzarbagh and by undertaking the manufacture of cotton carpets, kalins and so on, in their jails. Before long many private technical institutes were set up for the manufacture of various handloom fabrics.

To take stock briefly of the industrial progress of the province during the three decades and a half preceding independence, there were, at the end of the period, a good many oil mills along the Ganges. The Peninsular Tobacco Company at Monghyr, a big tannery at Motihari and several small tanneries elsewhere, the Rohtas and Dalmianagar cement works, numbers of sugar mills in North and South Bihar, a few engineering works besides the Tata and Jamalpur workshops, a considerable number of mica mines in Monghyr, Gaya and Hazaribagh, coal mines in Manbhum, the Government Lac Research Institute at Namkum (Ranchi), the Dhanbad School of Mining and the Silk Institute at Bhagalpur, may be mentioned as important developments in the field of industry in Bihar. Besides these, about fifty small industries were carried on by independent artisans on their own initiative, in addition to spinning and weaving. Basket and matmaking, brass work, blanket-weaving, rice-and-flour-milling, dyeing and calico-printing, glass-making, paper-making, ivory and ebony work, and stone work were the more important ones and are worthy of mention.

The position of industrial labour during the half century preceding independence was materially improved by State legislation for the provision of better housing and sanitation and the limitation of hours of work. But there was scope for further improvement. There was, moreover, an awakening among the wage earners due to the influence

of political factors and the growth of trade unionism. Labour unions in India, commonly regarded as a by-product of industrialization and Western influence, had their germs in the old guild system of our country. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, there was hardly a species of trade or craft which did not have its guild presided over by a headman. The guilds invariably saw to the interests of the craftsmen and artisans. Even combinations among workmen were not unknown at the end of the eighteenth century. But trade unionism in its present form developed in India after the First World War. Rising prices during the War brought about strikes in several places outside Bihar. Before long, especially after 1926, strikes were organized and trade unions were also formed in Bihar itself. But trade unionism gained a solid footing in the province during the Second World War and immediately after. From 1945 strikes became more frequent and Government intervention had to be sought in almost every instance. Yet Bihar had less troubles to face from labour than some of the other provinces of India.

Considerable progress was made during the period in the field of communications and transport. Several branch lines of the E.I.R., B.N.W.R. and B.N.R. were opened. But the most concrete achievement in this direction was the introduction of motor transport. At the beginning of the period, there was not a single motor bus in the Santhal Parganas, but by the end, over a hundred buses were running along a dozen routes. Buses were introduced also in the hill tracts of Chotanagpur, as well as in the plains of North and South Bihar, making communication much easier than before. The introduction of motor services necessitated the construction of pitch roads and greater attention to road repairing. The Second World War brought about a further improvement in road conditions. Yet, with all that, communications in the interior of North Bihar still continued to a great extent to be in a deplorable state. However, the introduction of cycle-rickshaws immensely facilitated short distance trips and soon made the slow moving carts fairly antiquated, except for the transport of commodities. In many places, these rickshaws largely displaced the horse-driven tamtams.

The First World War noticeably reduced the export of cereals from India on account of the loss of enemy markets and shortage of shipping. But Bihar was not much affected, because it exported little rice or wheat, though it ranked next to Bengal in rice

production. The other important products of Bihar were pulses, oilseeds, linseed, maize, sugar and raw cotton. Agricultural production on the whole showed an upward trend after 1918-19. But before conditions could improve further, the worldwide trade depression set in towards the end of 1929 and the plight of the agriculturists during the next twelve years was deplorable. Prices however, began to shoot up during 1942-3, thanks to inflation during the war, and this caused acute distress among the landless middle classes, while the condition of landlords and peasants improved. The easy availability of money during and immediately after the war made the peasant class fairly contented and it is no wonder that it began to enjoy small luxuries so far unknown to the rural population.

During the quarter century following the First World War, steps were taken for the intensification of agriculture both by the Government and by the zemindars. Co-operative credit societies were established and loans advanced to poor agriculturists. Minor irrigation works too were undertaken. At the same time, the technical aspects of agriculture were not wholly neglected. The raising of the Labour Co-operative Institute to the status of an agricultural college and the provision made for imparting training in co-operation at Pusa were well-advised steps along this line.

Although inflation greatly reduced the value of money after 1943, and the resulting high prices brought distress to the bulk of the people, large accumulations of cash in the hands of individuals indirectly fostered banking activities in the province. Many new banks, mostly branches of Calcutta houses, were opened in the towns of Bihar, but well over half of these very soon went into liquidation. Another effect of the increased accumulation of money was that non-industrialists began to invest largely in industries. The war, moreover, opened many new avenues of employment which benefited both the middle and lower classes. On the whole, despite loud outcries against the rising price level, and the demand for higher emoluments, there was a perceptible rise in the standard of living. In 1947 men seemed more comfortable, though much less contented, than ten or twenty years before. A good many of the poorer people could now afford a pair of shoes and a coarse cotton jacket or a half-shirt on the body. Poor aboriginal women of the Santhal Parganas and Chotanagpur often imitated, and sometimes came up to the standard of other middle-class ladies in dress. Yet

the increase in comforts and the general standard of living was trifling when compared with European countries.

The population of Bihar, in spite of the one hundred and ninety years of British connexion, was at the end of the period predominantly rural and agricultural. Eighty-six per cent of the total population (1941) or about 38,000,000 depended on agriculture, while the total urban population of Bihar hardly exceeded two million. The percentage of the population directly dependent on industry, including industrial labour, was altogether meagre. The total authorized capital of joint-stock companies in the State was in 1946-7 Rs 41,46,20,799; and their subscribed and paid-up capital was Rs 21,63,69,134 and Rs 24,79,55,978 respectively.

Bihar has immense industrial potentialities which are neglected. Some of the all but dead industries such as the saltpetre manufacture of North Bihar, could well be revived along scientific lines. Vast tracts of the land in Purnea which are lying fallow could be converted into one of the richest jute-growing and jute-manufacturing areas in India. Forest industries could be developed in the rugged soil of Chotanagpur and the Santhal Parganas. Raw cotton could be grown in plenty over considerable stretches of territory in South Bihar. The Bihar sugar industry, if proper encouragement were given, could reach a higher level of prosperity. Mineral industries could be developed in the Santhal Parganas, the soil of which contains deposits of coal, and possibly also of iron and lead. All this, and much more, could be accomplished through the utilization of Bihar's potential power resources, and the economic prosperity of its population could be ensured through a proper co-ordination between handicrafts and mechanical industries.

All this was taken up in the Five-Year Plans and one can easily see the marked progress since then.

E. Fine Arts

The Patna Style of Painting

With the establishment of Moghal rule in India and the restoration of peace and tranquillity, the taste for painting began to manifest itself in a new way. It is said that for one reason at least, Humayun's exile was a blessing in disguise for India. From Persia he brought a selected set of artists who, with the assistance of local talent, laid the foundation of the Moghal style of painting out of which arose

the various sub-schools or Kalams (brush-styles), the Patna Kalam being one of them.

Tradition has it that this school was pioneered by a number of enterprising artists whose ancestors belonged to Rajasthan, but who, in about the middle of the 16th century, migrated to the Moghal court. The famous Manohar, said to be an ancestor of the artists who founded this school, was one of the greatest painters of Akbar's time and a product of the Emperor's Agra studio. With the disintegration of the Moghal Empire, which began after Aurangzeb (1707) and the consequent decline of court favours and patronage, the artists began to leave Delhi and to move about in search of new patrons and new sources of livelihood. In this way a group of painters, including the descendants of Manohar, travelled towards the east and settled at Murshidabad, Bengal, which at that time appeared to them to be a better field and a more lucrative centre. In Murshidabad they settled in the village of Baluchak, but bad luck dogged them there also. That city was rapidly losing its importance and the situation developing there soon became unfavourable for the artists. This compelled them once again to move out of Murshidabad in search of a livelihood. The trek this time was to Patna. At first only a few members of the group arrived, but when they found the centre profitable, others followed, and by the early years of the nineteenth century a sufficient number of artists had already settled at Patna which had by that time again grown into an important city in Eastern India.

It is not certain who among the artists came to Patna first, but of the earliest recorded names we come across those of Sewak Ram (1770-1830) and Hulas Lall (1785-1875). Works of these two artists are still extant and are to be seen in the Patna Museum. Among other earlier artists we find the names of Jai Ram Das, Jhumak Lall, Fakirchand and Tuni Lall, who were contemporaries and recognized artists of their time.

The Patna style of painting reached its acme between the years 1850 and 1880. The two principal and most widely reputed artists who built up the great reputation of the Patna school were Shiv Lal and Shiv Dayalji, sons of Fakirchand Lall and Tuni Lall respectively. These two artists had quite a flourishing business at Patna, and among their customers were both Europeans and Indians. The subject-matter of their painting was portraiture as well as scenes of contemporary Indian life, and birds and flowers. These

two artists, apart from being outstanding, may be considered the principal contributors to the Patna school of painting. The studios which they established formed centres for the study of art in Patna city, where they trained and produced a number of artists who, later on, acquired great fame and constituted the bulk of the painters of the Patna school. Among the artists who were trained at these studios mention may be made of Gopal Lal, Gur Sahay Lall, Bani Lall, Bahadur Lall, Kanhai Lall and Jamuna Prasad. Works of art supposed to be by some of these artists are still available.

The Patna Kalam, having started much later than the other schools, tried to maintain the original technique of the Delhi and Lucknow schools, but allowed itself to be affected by foreign styles. For a long time the artists maintained a sufficiently high standard and originality in their scheme and mode of execution but later, foreign contact polluted their style to a great extent and interfered with their originality. As regards the technique employed in their mode of painting, it may be said that, unlike the Delhi artists, they used the slanting dot system in their shading, while in the treatment of backgrounds, they mostly employed some such things as a door overlooking a river, a garden scene, a partition of a room with pillars and curtain, ornamented draperies and so on. They differed in their colour scheme as well, inasmuch as they used rich colours and mostly original tints.

Like the Delhi artists, they also knew how to extract colours from plants, barks, flowers, precious stones and metals. White was prepared from shell and burnt lead from Kasghar, red from zangar, yellow from clay and tree barks, blue from laju stone and so on. They painted on glass, mica, and ivory sheets, while the smaller works were executed on mica with a special technique. Gold, both in diluted and in sheet form, was used in their paintings.

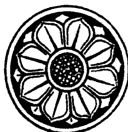
The themes of the Patna artists were mostly from common life and such things as a stone-cutter, a shoemaker, a palanquin bearer, a pedlar, a butter-seller, a distillery, or a bakery figured in their work. Paintings of the various birds found at Patna were also one of their specialities.

In Bihar the chief centres where they came and settled were Patna, Dinapore and Arrah. In Patna they favoured the Lodikatra and Mughalpura quarters. But the Patna school too could not flourish for long. Evil times befell its patrons as well as the school. It was a

tragedy that this brilliant school, which was showing signs of growing into a rival of the Delhi group of artists, was nipped in the bud before it could attain its full stature. Being short-lived, it was confined to a limited area in Bihar and both its members and productions were limited.

A brilliant and fully representative collection of this school of painting is to be seen in the Patna Museum and in the collection of the State Art Gallery attached to the Government School of Arts and Crafts. Apart from the technique, the scheme of colours and the design, there are certain other peculiarities which are interesting to students of history and art; for instance, the life of Patna some two to three hundred years ago, with vehicles, costumes, and different kinds of trade and industries is reflected in these paintings.

The last two representatives of the Patna style of painting, were Babu Mahadeo Lall, the Guru of the present Principal of the Government School of Arts and Crafts, Patna, and Shri Ishwari Prasad Verma, Ex-Vice Principal of the Government School of Art, Calcutta. Works of art produced by them are still available at Patna in the family of Maharaja Ram Narain at Maharajghat and at the Indian Museum, Calcutta, respectively.



XX

THE POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD (15 AUGUST 1947—MARCH 1957)

THE achievement of independence on 15 August 1947, which came as the culmination of a long period of national struggle in which Bihar had played a notable part, must be regarded as one of the most important turning-points in the long history of India, and of Bihar. In the brief period of ten years or so that has passed since independence, there have been more significant developments in the political and constitutional set-up of the country as also in the social, economic, and cultural spheres, than in any comparable period previously. In a sense, power had been transferred to Indian hands in the provinces in April 1946, when the Congress Party which had led and directed the battle for the freedom of the country, formed ministries in Bihar, and in several other provinces. The period of April 1946 to 15 August 1947 was, however, one of uneasy transition, marked by grave uncertainties about the future, and the occurrence of communal disturbances on an extensive scale. The final and full transfer of power to Indian hands came on 15 August 1947, and the people celebrated the occasion with unprecedented joy and enthusiasm, in spite of sadness caused by the fateful partition of the country.

SOME ADVERSE FACTORS

The achievement of independence gave rise to a feeling of ardent hope and expectancy in the minds of the people that social and economic conditions would improve rapidly, and almost automatically. There was no longer any struggle between the people and their government. A government which represented them was in the saddle. Their interests were now one and indivisible with those of the Government. Both could address themselves in full freedom

to the task of rebuilding the country. It was not, however, generally realized that there were many adverse factors confronting the new Government, and that in the first instance, in any case, priority would have to be given to, what we may broadly call, the problems of survival and consolidation. Practically since 1919, that is for a period of nearly thirty years preceding independence, the British administration in India had been largely preoccupied with the task of combating the national movement, and with problems which arose directly or indirectly as a result of India's involvement, against the wishes of her people, in the Second World War. The fabric of civil administration had suffered severely in the process. There was also depletion of the administrative cadre caused by insufficient recruitment over a large number of years, and finally by the exit of the British members of the services on 15 August 1947. The law and order situation had also deteriorated seriously in the years following the war, and by the stresses caused by the partition of the country. The prevalence of a feeling of uncertainty in the minds of a large number of people during the period of transition (1946-7) had made the situation worse.

The economy of Bihar had been in a stagnant condition for several decades, though at the same time, the population had been growing more rapidly than ever before. It suffered serious damage therefore during the Second World War and the years following it. There were repeated crop failures between 1942 and 1947, and as even normal food imports could not be efficiently arranged, there was chronic scarcity of foodgrains and other essential requirements. This inevitably had its effect on public health, and the province suffered from severe epidemics of cholera practically every year from 1943 to 1947. Inflation was rampant. The wholesale price of rice which was only Rs 5-9 per maund in August 1941, had risen to Rs 23 per maund by August 1947, and rose further to Rs 33-8 per maund by October 1950, when the index number of the wholesale price of rice rose to 1,010 at Gaya from 100 as base on 1 September 1939. The per capita revenue of Bihar was the lowest among all the provinces in India, and because of inflationary pressure, additional expenditure on the maintenance of public order and food supplies, and the relief and rehabilitation of Muslim refugees belonging to the province who had suffered in the disturbances of 1946, Bihar's finances were in a very poor condition. Displaced persons from Pakistan began to pour in from July 1947,

and this imposed further strain on the food and financial resources of the province. How serious the economic situation was became clear only in 1950-1 when Bihar was faced with the threat of famine. The census taken in 1951 revealed that while the population had increased by 11 millions since 1921, the average rate of population growth during this period being five times the pre-1921 rate, there had been no significant increase in either the agricultural or industrial production over all these years. The average density of population had risen to 572 in the State as a whole, which is roughly equal to the average density of Japan and nearly three times the average density of France, and in four districts, which have a purely rural and agricultural economy, the density was well above 1,100 persons to the square mile. Out of 40·2 million persons enumerated in Bihar in 1951, no less than 37·5 millions or 93·3 per cent of the population were rural, and 34·6 millions or over 86 per cent of the total population were found to be dependent for their livelihood on agriculture as against 69·8 per cent in all India, and 57·2 per cent in West Bengal. The dependence on agriculture had been almost continuously on the increase since 1901, when only 73 per cent of the population of Bihar was dependent on agriculture. Village and cottage industries had been continuously on the decline in this period, and though there were some developments in coal and mica mining, and a few large industrial units such as the Tata Iron and Steel Company had been formed in the first twenty years or so of the present century, there had been no significant development in this direction in the period of thirty years before independence (1921-50).

PROBLEMS OF SURVIVAL AND CONSOLIDATION AUGUST 1947-50

The post-independence period may conveniently be divided into two parts (*i*) August 1947-50, when the State was mainly occupied with what we may broadly call the problems of survival and consolidation, and (*ii*) 1951-6 the First Five-Year Plan period, during which the accent was on development. Though this is a convenient division, it would be wrong to assume that Government was wholly preoccupied during the earlier period with the problems of restoration of law and order, maintenance of communal peace, arrangements for the supply of food and essential commodities, and similar problems. These received some priority over others, but India had declared

herself to be a Welfare State and there was a keen desire from the very start to build a society based on the ideals of social equality and justice, and to take measures for the promotion of rapid economic development. As will appear later, a number of measures of far-reaching importance were taken in Bihar, even during this early period, towards the achievement of these objects.

The aftermath of war, resulting in inflation, and very high food prices, scarcity of food-stuffs and other essential requirements and a general lowering of public morale, not to speak of the communal disorders which occurred in the State towards the end of 1946, had produced a very serious law and order situation and there was a large increase in the incidence of crime. There was also widespread agrarian trouble in the districts of Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur, Gaya, Monghyr, and Patna. Two legislative measures, namely, the Bihar Maintenance of Public Order Act and the Bihar Essential Services Maintenance Act, were passed in 1947 to empower Government to take special measures, where necessary, in the interests of public safety and the maintenance of order, and for preventing the desertion of their posts by persons engaged in the essential services. The organization of the Bihar Home Guards, which is a voluntary organization for assisting the Government in the maintenance of peace and tranquillity and developing a sense of civic responsibility among the people, was also taken up in that year. The recruitment of Home Guards actually started in February 1948. A large number of persons immediately offered themselves for enrolment and the organization grew rapidly. Thanks to these and other measures taken by Government to reorganize and strengthen the peace and order arrangements, and the close vigilance exercised by the magistracy and the police, there was a definite improvement in the crime situation by 1949.

THE ABOLITION OF ZAMINDARIS

Among the important welfare and development measures taken during this period, pride of place must be given to the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1949, and the Bihar Panchayat Raj Act, 1947. The elimination of all intermediaries between the peasants and the State was a declared objective of the Congress Party. It was felt that without this basic reform, there could be no lasting improvement in agriculture. It was also necessary to take steps to increase the revenues of the State for the financing of the welfare and development

plans which were contemplated. In many places, the zamindars tended to be regarded as holding a superior social position and there were many instances of the misuse of their social and economic privileges. To allow such a system to continue would clearly have been against all the canons of social justice and equality to which India was pledged. The decision to abolish the zamindari system was taken as early as 1947, and a bill known as the Bihar State Acquisition of the Zamindaris Bill, 1947, was introduced in the Legislative Assembly on 11 September, within a month of the achievement of independence, and enacted in 1948. This measure, however, on account of certain flaws, proved infructuous and was replaced later by a more comprehensive one known as the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950. This Act provided for the taking over of zamindaris by Government by public notification, and for the assessment of compensation to the dispossessed zamindars at rates varying from twenty times the net income in respect of zamindaris having net incomes below rupees five hundred and to only three times the net income for zamindaris having net incomes of rupees one lakh and above. It also provided for the collection of rents, through panchayats and for the appointment of a Land Commission.

THE PANCHAYAT RAJ

It has been said that India lives in her villages. This is very true of Bihar, where over 93 per cent of the population is rural. The need for the reorganization of village life on democratic lines as the first step towards its social and economic uplift was uppermost in the minds of the people. The Bihar Panchayat Raj Act was passed by the Legislature in 1947 and brought into force soon after it had received the assent of the Governor-General in February 1948. This measure was intended to restore initiative to the villagers. The Act provides for the formation of Village Panchayats, of which all adults ordinarily residing in the village or villages for which the Panchayat is constituted, can be members. The Panchayat is required to undertake the responsibility for sanitation, conservancy, medical relief and first aid, the supply of drinking water, the cleansing and disinfecting of sources of water, the maintenance of crop, animal, and vital statistics, the control and prevention of epidemics and infectious diseases, the maintenance and construction of village roads, the removal of encroachment on public places, the management and care of common village lands, common grazing

grounds, burning ghats, and graveyards, and the protection and improvement of irrigation works in the villages. Under the Act, Panchayats may also take over the responsibility for primary education, the prevention and cure of cattle diseases, the improvement of cattle breeds, and development of agriculture, the commerce and industry in the village if the majority of the members of the Executive Committee so decide, or if the Government so directs. The affairs of the Panchayats are administered through an executive committee of which the head is known as the Mukhia. The Mukhia is elected by a majority of votes of those present at the meeting of the Panchayat specially convened for the purpose, and is authorized to appoint the members of his own executive committee from among the members of the Panchayat. There is a permanent employee known as the Gram Sevak attached to each Panchayat who functions as the executive officer of the Panchayat. The Act also makes provision for the establishment of a Gram Kutchery consisting of a panel of persons to be elected by the Panchayat. It has been laid down that no member or Panch of the Gram Kutchery, and the panel of members or panchas are to be parties to any dispute before them. It is expected that the Gram Kutchery will try to bring about the amicable settlement of as many disputes as possible. If no such settlement can be made, it enquires into the dispute and gives its decision. The Kutchery has the power of a third-class magistrate and can sentence a person to imprisonment for one month and a fine up to Rs 50 only. These powers have, of course, to be exercised subject to various restrictions, and there is also provision for appeal.

The Bihar and Chotanagpur Tenancy Acts were amended between 1947 and 1949 to give occupancy-tenants the right of manufacturing bricks and tiles, excavating tanks and sinking wells (as also the right of planting trees and bamboos and rearing lac and cocoons on trees in Chotanagpur) and to improving their position in other respects. The Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act, which was passed in 1949, brought together the various regulations relating to tenancy which applied to the Santhal Parganas, and modified them where necessary with a view to giving greater security and freedom to the tenants in the enjoyment of land rights. Some reference was made earlier to the serious agrarian troubles of 1947. In most cases, these troubles had arisen on account of disputes between zamindars and tenants over *bakasht* lands. The Bihar Bakasht Dispute Settlement

Act, 1947 was passed for settlement of such disputes through arbitration boards. The position of artisans and labourers in respect of homestead lands was, generally speaking, that of tenants-at-will, and they could be turned out at any time by the landlord or the occupancy raiyat from whom the land might have been obtained, irrespective of the length of the period of occupation. The Bihar Privileged Persons Homestead Tenancy Act was passed in 1947 to give security to such persons with regard to possession of their homestead lands, and artisans and landless labourers were given the same rights in their homestead lands as were enjoyed by cultivators under the tenancy law.

TRIBAL WELFARE

It had been laid down in the Congress Election Manifesto of 1945 that 'the State shall provide all necessary safeguards for the protection and the development of the backward and suppressed elements in the population so that they might make rapid progress and take a full and equal part in the national life' and that, 'in particular, the State will help in the development of the people of the tribal areas in a manner most suited to their genius, and in the education and social and economic progress of the Scheduled classes.' A separate Ministry to deal with the welfare of the backward classes had been constituted in Bihar in 1946, even before independence had been achieved. With the achievement of independence, a five-fold programme comprising the starting of grain-golas, the provision of better irrigation facilities, the award of stipends and scholarships, the construction of hostels and the preservation and advancement of tribal culture, was launched for the economic and educational uplift of the tribal population. Simultaneously, steps were taken for the provision of school and hostel facilities, and the grant of stipends to Harijan students as also to students belonging to backward Hindu and Muslim communities.

BASIC EDUCATION

Bihar was the pioneer in the field of basic education and the first experiment in this field was started here in 1938. Between 1947 and 1950 there was considerable expansion of basic education, which had come to be regarded as the appropriate pattern for elementary education for young children and the number of basic institutions which stood at twenty-eight in 1947 had increased

to 569 by the end of 1950-1. Particular attention was paid to the training of teachers for the requirements of basic schools.

CONSERVATION OF FORESTS

When the Congress Ministry took office in 1946 it was found that the denudation of forests which, except for a small area of 2,606 sq. miles were under private control and management, had continued for a long time, and immediate steps were necessary to stop it. A new and comprehensive piece of legislation called the Bihar Private Forests Act was, therefore, passed towards the end of 1946, and between 1949 and 1950, over 9,000 sq. miles of private forests were taken over under Government control and management under the provisions of the Act, with a view to their preservation and development. A special afforestation division was created for planting trees of economic importance in selected areas.

IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE

The Bihar Private Irrigation and Drainage Act, 1947 was passed with a view to simplifying the procedure for taking up irrigation, drainage, land reclamation, and flood control works, and to give necessary authority to Government to levy a cess for the recovery of the cost of maintenance. The Bihar Private Irrigation Works (Amendment) Act, was passed in 1950 to give larger powers to Government to acquire any existing irrigation works in order to extend, alter, or repair them, to construct certain kinds of new irrigation works and to take over and maintain existing ones. These measures laid the foundations for a rapid expansion of the irrigation programme which came later. Besides the Sakri canal scheme, 28 other small irrigation schemes were taken up for execution and were completed wholly or in part during this period. The investigation of the Gandak project and the scheme for the remodelling of the Sone canal was started at the same time. Attention was also paid to the possibility of the drainage of chaur lands in North Bihar and to the provision of flood protection embankments and the drainage of twenty-one chaurs had been completed before 1951.

FINANCIAL MEASURES

The question of raising the revenue resources of the State also received special attention during this period. The main sources of revenue that were developed at this time were Sales Tax, Agricultural Income

Tax, Entertainment Tax, Electricity Duty, and a tax on goods and passengers carried by motor transport. These measures were important, for if they had not been taken in time, it would have been impossible for the finances of the State to bear the increased expenditure on social services and other welfare measures, the cost of relief and rehabilitation of people afflicted by floods and other natural calamities and at the same time to provide ample funds for the execution of the First Five-Year Plan schemes.

SEPARATION OF THE JUDICIARY AND EXECUTIVE

One of the reforms which the Indian National Congress had demanded from the very beginning of its institution was the separation of judiciary and executive functions and within three months after independence, a judicial officer was placed on special duty to work out a detailed scheme, which was introduced in three districts in 1951.

CONSTITUTION-MAKING

While all this work was being done in Bihar State, the task of framing the Constitution had been taken in hand by the Constituent Assembly of India in New Delhi. This was finalized and adopted on 26 November 1949 and came into force on 26 January 1950, the date of proclamation of the foundation of the Indian Republic. It aims at securing for all its citizens, 'Justice, social, economic, and political; Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; Equality of status and of opportunity,' and seeks to promote among them all, 'Fraternity, assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation.' It guarantees to every citizen the right of equality; the right to freedom; the right against exploitation; the right to freedom of religion; cultural and educational rights; the right to property; and the right to constitutional remedies. It also lays down certain fundamental or directive principles of policy, which are not justifiable, but which nevertheless, each State as well as the Union of India are expected to follow. The directives provide that the State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting, as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall pervade all the institutions of national life, and shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing (*a*) that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood; (*b*) that the ownership

and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good; and (c) that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment. It also enjoins that the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker section of the people, and in particular of the Scheduled castes and the Scheduled tribes and shall protect them from all social injustices and all forms of exploitation. The organization of Village Panchayats as units of self-government and the separation of the judiciary and the executive are declared to be directive principles. The Constitution declares India to be a Union of States. The distribution of power between the Centre and the States (formerly called provinces) remains the same as under the Government of India Act, 1935, but the accent is on national unity and the Centre has been given overriding powers over a large field.

It will be noticed that several of the directives enshrined in the Constitution such as the welfare of backward classes, the organization of Panchayats had already been adopted as the guiding principles of policy in Bihar before the Constitution came into force.

The first general election under the Constitution on the basis of adult suffrage was held in the winter of 1951-2, and the Congress party was again returned to power in Bihar with an overwhelming majority.

The First Five-Year Plan Period 1951-6

The Planning Commission was set up in March 1950, within a few months of the coming into force of the Constitution, to make an assessment of the material, capital, and human resources of the country and to formulate a plan for the most effective and balanced utilization of the country's resources. The draft outline of the First Five-Year Plan was ready in July 1951, and though some of the schemes included in it had been sanctioned earlier, the Plan took its final shape only in December 1952. The National Development Council, which includes the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers of all the States, was constituted shortly before this in August 1952 for effective co-ordination. The objective of the First Five-Year Plan was to initiate a process of development which would raise living standards, and open out for the people new opportunities for a richer and more varied life. In the First Five-Year

Programme, pride of place was given to agriculture, irrigation, and community development, for, the vast majority of the people are dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. The central idea of the Community Development Programme and the National Extension Programme is to associate the people with the planning and the execution of the Development Programme, and thus to mobilize local manpower for a concerted and co-ordinated effort at raising not only the level of agricultural productivity but the whole level of rural life. The development of basic services like power and transport were placed next in order of priority to agriculture and community development in the plan. The importance of industrial development was recognized but it was considered, and rightly so, that without a substantial increase in the production of food and of raw materials needed for industry, and the development of power resources and transport, it would not be possible to undertake a programme of development of industries on a large scale.

DROUGHT AND FLOODS 1951-4

In several ways, 1951, the year of the commencement of the First Five-Year Plan proved to be a very difficult year. The first census after independence was taken in February-March of that year, and was followed by the first general election based on universal adult franchise. Nomination papers were filed on 24 November 1951, and the actual polling and counting of votes took place between 4 January and 15 February 1952. Two administrative operations of great magnitude had thus to be carried out while the State was threatened with a severe famine, and it was necessary to utilize all the resources available to Government for meeting this threat. The food situation which was fairly serious when the Congress took office in 1946 but which had, on the whole, shown some improvement in the following years, suddenly became grave in October 1950 due to complete failure of the Hathia rains. The situation assumed alarming proportions, and a disaster was averted only by importing large quantities of foodgrains from outside. For several months, nearly twenty million persons were dependent for their food on Government ration shops numbering about 11,000, and during the four months from May to August 1951, the offtake from ration shops varied between 82,000 to 98,000 tons a month. Gratuitous relief had to be given to poor and unemployed persons and relief works of different kinds organized to give employment to people at a cost of over 2¼ crores of

rupees. Loans amounting to Rs 2¼ crores were advanced to cultivators for agricultural purposes.

The situation improved in 1952, but there was again a sharp rise in food prices from July to September which caused anxiety. There was an improvement in the food situation in 1953-4 when harvests were good throughout the State, and this improvement was generally maintained in the remaining two years of the plan.

But there was another cause for anxiety namely, the heavy loss from floods practically every year. The flood damage was exceptionally severe in 1954 when rivers in North Bihar started rising, more or less, simultaneously towards the end of July, and standing crops as well as houses were damaged or destroyed completely over large parts of the district of Saran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Saharsa, Purnea, and north Monghyr. The flood discharge in the Gandak was 6·5 lakh cusecs, the highest recorded since 1902. The overflow of the Sikrahna, Burhi Gandak, Bāgmati, Kamla, and a number of smaller rivers was also the highest in many years. The Mahānanda, and other streams in the northern and eastern parts of the Purnea district also caused flood damage. There were fresh floods from 21 August in the same year and almost all the rivers which had caused the first floods rose again well beyond the danger level. The Burhi Gandak and Bāgmati again reached record flood levels, and the flow of the Kosi at Barahkshetra rose to 8·6 lakh cusecs on 24 August, the highest ever recorded. Nearly 10,000 sq. miles covering about 21,000 villages with a population of nearly 184 lakhs were affected by these floods. The entire administrative machinery in the affected districts had to remain busy with rescue and relief operations for months, and over Rs 3½ crores were spent on gratuitous relief, and over Rs 5 crores on loans to cultivators. The floods were followed by droughts over large parts of the State and a further expenditure of Rs 1·6 crores had to be incurred in gratuitous relief and relief works, and Rs 1·0 crore in loans to meet the situation.

The scarcity of 1951, and the severe floods that occurred in 1954, as also the controversies that arose later over the question of the redistribution of territories between Bihar, West Bengal, and Orissa, following the appointment of the States Reorganization Commission by the Government of India on 29 December 1953, made it difficult for the Government and the people of the State to concentrate on the task of execution of the First Five-Year Plan schemes. Though the

revenue resources of the State had increased as a result of measures taken in the earlier period (1947-50), the finances of the State were seriously depleted on account of the heavy expenditure which had to be incurred in relief work in 1951 and again in 1954. In spite of difficulties, the execution of the First Five-Year Plan scheme made satisfactory progress during 1951-2 as a good deal of preparatory work had been done before in respect of several schemes. The development programme was, however, deliberately slowed down in 1952-3 and also in the first half of 1953-4 due to financial difficulties. There was also some interruption in the execution of development programmes in some districts in 1954 due to floods, but fortunately this did not continue for long.

ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE FIRST PLAN PERIOD

In the preceding paragraphs, we have surveyed some of the important happenings in Bihar during 1951-6. A brief account may be given now of the progress of the development schemes during this period.

Originally, a provision of Rs 57·29 crores only was made for all schemes included in the First Five-Year Plan of Bihar. Substantial increases were made later in the provision for irrigation, power, and road-development schemes and the total plan provision was thus increased to Rs 67·79 crores. The actual expenditure on plan schemes has, however, exceeded Rs 73 crores. A number of important development schemes, such as the Community Project and N.E.S. schemes were taken up later outside the plan, and the total expenditure incurred on these schemes was Rs 52 crores. The total expenditure on all development schemes in the First Five-Year Plan period was thus Rs 125 crores.

AGRICULTURE

The agricultural plan mainly provided for assistance to cultivators in the form of subsidies and loans for the construction of surface percolation wells, open borings, tubewells, medium and minor ahars, pynes, and bundhs, and the purchase of lift engines, pumps and rahats; grants of subsidies for encouraging cultivators to use phosphatic manures; the organization of compost production; the multiplication and distribution of seeds of certain crops; the improvement of sugarcane cultivation, the establishment of experimental farms; the expansion of agricultural research, and agricultural education. Thus 29,954 medium and minor ahars and pynes, 16,459 surface percolation wells,

7,082 open borings, and 116 tubewells were constructed with the help of Government subsidies. There has been an appreciable increase in the production and utilization of compost, and the consumption of chemical fertilizers increased from about 10 thousand tons annually to over 35 thousand tons. This indicates that the Bihari farmer is beginning to realize the advantages of adopting scientific methods of cultivation and this has immense significance for the future. Schemes relating to the expansion of facilities for agricultural education and training have also made good progress. The annual admissions to the degree course in agriculture at the Sabour College have been doubled, and provision made there for post-graduate teaching in five subjects, agronomy, horticulture, plant pathology, entomology, and agricultural extension. A new college of agriculture has also been established at Ranchi. There were no agricultural schools in Bihar till August 1953, when four basic agricultural schools were set up at Sipya, Pusa, Gaya and Ranchi. A fifth school was started at Dumka in 1954, and 12 more were set up later so as to give one such school to each district. Four Extension Training Centres were also established during this period for training Village Level Workers to be employed in extension duties in rural areas.

Arrangements were made for the rearing and distribution of fish fry for promoting the development of fishery and 2·3 crores of fish fry were distributed. Steps were also taken for organizing the training of personnel.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING

Agriculture in Bihar is dependent almost solely on bullock power and in some parts of the State, particularly in the Kosi belt, milk and dairy products are an important subsidiary source of income to cultivators. The number of cattle is, however, excessive in relation to the area and a large proportion of them is of inferior breed and unproductive. Three cattle farms were established for raising improved bulls, and 622 bulls were distributed in different areas. For the intensive development of the cattle of selected areas, 13 key village centres were organized, 52 artificial insemination centres and 140 sub-centres were started during the last two years of the plan. A central poultry farm was started at Patna, and a number of poultry development and hatching centres were established at different places in the State for poultry improvement and development. It was originally proposed to start 95 new veterinary dispensaries, but actually only 72 dispensaries

could be opened as a sufficient number of Veterinary Assistant Surgeons were not available. To remove the shortage of trained veterinary personnel, steps were taken, though somewhat belatedly, to increase the annual intake in the Veterinary College, Patna, and also for starting an emergency two-year diploma course in veterinary science. Another short one-year course for the training of Stock Supervisors was started at Bhagalpur. The establishment of a Livestock Research Station with seven sections was also provided for in the plan, but due to the non-availability of trained personnel this scheme did not make satisfactory progress; only two sections could be started by the end of 1955-6.

FORESTRY

As mentioned earlier, over 13,000 sq. miles of forest area had been taken over by Government for control and management by 1951. The first two years of the first plan were devoted mainly to the task of setting up an organization in the areas that had been newly taken over for the work of conservation and development. Approximately 5,500 acres of waste land has been afforested in South Bihar and 500 acres in North Bihar. The last year of the First Five-Year Plan saw also the initiation of a soil conservation programme in the plateau area which has considerable significance for the future.

CO-OPERATION

The building up of a co-operative sector as a part of the programme of a planned, economic development was one of the important aims of the First Five-Year Plan. Though the co-operative credit movement had started in Bihar in the early years of the twentieth century, it did not make much progress for a variety of reasons. An attempt was made in the First Five-Year Plan period to enlarge the scope of co-operative enterprises in the State by the organization of village multi-purpose societies, and special types of societies such as, Weavers' Co-operative Societies, Oilmen's Societies and Fishermen's Co-operative Societies, wherever necessary. Simultaneously, efforts were made to strengthen the capital structure of the Apex Bank, Central Banks and other societies, and to expand the facilities for co-operative training. In all 12,268 multi-purpose co-operative societies, of which 9,289 were new units, were thus organized between 1951 and 1956. The number of Canegrowers' Co-operative Societies which are permitted to function as multi-purpose units

also rose from 6,005 to 7,839, and the quality cane supplied by them to factories increased from 260 lakh maunds in 1950-1 to 414 lakh maunds in 1955-6. The co-operative movement among weavers grew rapidly in the last two years of the First Plan period and 575 Weavers' Co-operative Societies with a total membership of about 85 thousand weavers had been organized by the end of 1955-6. During the same period the Bihar State Handloom Co-operative Union and the various Handloom Sales Emporia in the State sold handloom cloth produced by the Weavers' Co-operative Societies to the value of nearly one crore of rupees. The share capital of the State Co-operative Bank was raised from Rs 4 lakhs to nearly Rs 45 lakhs in 1955 for reorganising and strengthening some of the Central societies and for revitalizing the primary ones. There has been an appreciable increase in the distribution of fertiliser loans and other credits through co-operatives since 1953.

IRRIGATION AND FLOOD PROTECTION

At the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan, the area under assured irrigation was only about 8 lakh acres. An additional area of 5·6 lakh acres was brought under irrigation during the First Plan. In addition, over one lakh acres of good arable land were reclaimed for rabi cultivation by the drainage of chaurs, and 11 lakh acres protected from floods by the construction of new embankments or remodelling and strengthening existing ones.

The investigation of the Gandak and Kosi projects was practically completed during this period. The execution of the Kosi project, which provides for the construction of a barrage about 4 miles above Hanumānnagar in Nepal, the construction of flood protection embankments on either side below the barrage and for construction of canals which would provide irrigation to 14 lakh acres, actually commenced on 14 January 1955. Thanks to the enthusiastic co-operation of the public in the area and elsewhere and the zeal shown by the project staff, substantial progress was made with the construction of the western and eastern embankments before the onset of the monsoon that year, which saved a large number of villages from floods in the very first year of the execution of the plan.

Though the Kosi Project is important in itself, it is possible that future generations will remember it chiefly, because the method of public co-operation for the execution of major projects was evolved for the first time in this project. The essence of this method is that

the public of the locality or the region themselves take up the execution of tasks which call for no special skill, and which can be performed without the use of expensive machinery. The advantages of this method are manifold. Firstly, local manpower is used as far as possible, resulting in a saving of national resources as regards the transport of workers from other areas, payments to contractors, and import of machinery and equipment. Secondly, where the public of the area are themselves willing participants in the scheme, many local difficulties are resolved without delay and the work is done expeditiously. Thirdly, members of the public who do their work in connection with the execution of the project are paid some remuneration and the people thus begin to derive benefits from the projects even before it has been completed. In the very first season, over 14 lakh voluntary workers (including N. C. C., Home Guards, Gram Sewaks and Shramdanis) were thus engaged in constructing embankments.

POWER DEVELOPMENT

The Damodar Valley Corporation Project was taken up in the second half of 1948 as a multi-purpose scheme in partnership by the Governments of India, Bihar and West Bengal. Three of the schemes included in the first phase of the project, viz., the Tilaiya Dam, the Bokaro Thermal Power Station, and the Konar Dam, all of which are located in Bihar, had been completed by the end of 1955-6. The Bokaro Power Station has an installed capacity of 1·50 mega-watts which will be raised later to 2·25 mega-watts. The Tilaiya Dam provides 3·5 mega-watts of hydel power. Though the Bokaro Station will be supplying a substantial part of the power generated by it to West Bengal, it has undoubtedly improved the power supply position in the coal-fields and the industrial belt of South Bihar very substantially. The State Electricity Department has also installed 15 pilot diesel generating stations, 12 of which are in North Bihar and 3 in South Bihar. The total power generated increased from 47 mega-watts in 1951 to 208 mega-watts in 1956. A network of 3,530 miles of high and low tension transmission lines with 1,407 transformer stations has been constructed. Power supply has now been extended to 46 towns and 313 villages which did not receive any supply before. 129 coal mines and 53 mica mines have been electrified and 793 irrigation tubewells energised.

ROADS

At the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan there were only 1,952 miles of improved roads in the State including national highways. The road development programme of Bihar in the First Five-Year Plan was among the biggest in all India, and by 1956 there were 4,220 miles of improved roads. But even with this improvement, the average length of metalled road per lakh of the population in Bihar works out to 10·5 miles against an average of 27 miles per lakh of the population for all Part A States in India in 1950.

INDUSTRY

This period saw the establishment of the fertiliser factory at Sindri by the Government of India which produces over 3 lakh tons of ammonium sulphate annually. A cement factory was set up later at Sindri for the utilization of fertiliser slag. There are good prospects for the development, in due course, of several chemical industries in this area. The establishment of a superphosphate factory at Sindri was taken up by the State Government and though this scheme did not make satisfactory progress due to difficulties in obtaining supplies of equipment, practically all the equipment needed had been received by the end of the First Plan period. Initial steps were also taken during the later part of the First Plan for expanding the Tata Iron and Steel Company, the Tata Engineering and Locomotive Works, and the cement, paper and other industries at Dalmianagar. A State Financial Corporation was set up by the State Government early in 1955 for financing small and medium-scale industries. Also, for the first time serious efforts were made to encourage the development of small-scale industries by granting of loans under the State Aid to Industries Act, and by organizing the training of a large number of instructors, technicians and craftsmen.

EDUCATION

In the field of education there was all-round expansion and improvement. At the commencement of the plan, there were 2,072 middle and senior basic schools, and 23,699 primary and junior basic schools with 15·65 lakh pupils, and only 27·3 per cent of children in age-groups 6-11 and only 10·5 per cent of boys and girls in age-groups 11-14 were attending schools in Bihar. At the end of the First Plan period, the number of middle schools had increased to 3,321 and of primary schools to 29,541 with a total of 20·31 lakh pupils, and the percentage

of school-going children in age-groups 6-11 and 11-14 had risen to 30 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. Simultaneously the quality of teaching at the primary and middle school stage was sought to be improved by increasing the number of basic schools, improving the salaries of teachers in primary schools, upgrading lower primary schools to upper primary, and adding to the number of teachers, particularly trained teachers. The number of high schools including post-basic schools also increased from 648 to 960 and the number of both boys and girls in secondary schools increased from 5·5 lakhs to 7 lakhs during the same period. Science teaching was introduced in as many as 500 high schools and the courses of studies were modified to provide for the introduction of diversified courses to suit individual aptitudes. A number of selected high schools were given grants for their development into multilateral high schools providing for the teaching of the humanities, science, and special groups such as, home science and commerce, arts and crafts, engineering and agriculture.

At the commencement of the First Five-Year Plan, there was only one college of engineering namely, the Bihar College of Engineering at Patna admitting 42 students annually to the degree course in civil engineering, and only one school of engineering with 60 seats. Three new colleges of engineering namely, the Bihar Institute of Technology, Sindri, the Institute of Technology, Muzaffarpur, and the Birla Institute of Technology, Ranchi, besides four new schools of engineering at Ranchi, Sindri, Bhagalpur, and Patna have been established in the First Plan period. The annual intake of students to the engineering degree course has thus increased from 42 in 1951 to about 350 by July 1956, and to the engineering diploma course from 60 to about 400 annually. The Sindri Institute provides degree courses in five branches, viz., Mechanical, Electrical, Production, Chemical, and Metallurgical Engineering, while courses in Civil Engineering and Telecommunication will also be started here later. The Birla Institute teaches Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, but other subjects may also be introduced later. Mechanical and Electrical Engineering courses have been started also at Patna. The School of Engineering at Muzaffarpur and the Technical Schools at Ranchi and Muzaffarpur were also expanded and modernized, and a new technical school started at Chaibassa. The Cottage Industries Institute, Patna, the Silk Institute, Bhagalpur, and the evening mining classes at Bagha and Sijua were also re-organized and expanded at the same time,

while a school for training instructors in different trades and crafts was established at Sindri.

A teaching university was established at Patna from 2 January 1952 and a new (affiliating) university known as the Bihar University was created with jurisdiction over all colleges in Bihar outside Patna. The number of scholars in colleges increased from 24,740 in 1951-2 to nearly 50,000 at the end of the plan period, and the number of teachers was doubled. The Ranchi College and T. N. J. College, Bhagalpur, were raised to the post-graduate standard in Arts. No less than 34 new colleges were started, and the annual admissions to the intermediate science course increased from 1,584 to 3,200.

MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

There was considerable expansion in medical and public health facilities during the First Plan and the total expenditure on medical and public health increased from only about Rs 1 crore in 1947-8 to Rs 1·8 crores in 1951-2 and Rs 3·9 crores in 1955-6. The effects of these measures are clearly reflected in the mortality rate which has shown continuous and rapid decline since the achievement of independence. Cholera, which appeared almost every year from 1943 to 1947 in epidemic form, has been almost completely controlled and mortality from fever, particularly malaria, has also decreased significantly. The National Anti-Malaria Control programme was started in Bihar in 1953 and thanks to this and the introduction of an integrated scheme providing for the taking of both preventive and curative measures in selected areas, the incidence of malaria had been brought down by the end of the plan period to about one-third of what it used to be before.

A T. B. centre was started at Patna with assistance from UNICEF and the number of beds for T. B. patients has been nearly tripled. A statewide campaign was started for mass B.C.G. vaccination as protection against T. B. and over 35 lakh persons had been given B.C.G. vaccination by the end of 1956.

With the help of UNICEF and WHO 35 new Child Welfare and Maternity Centres were established and the activities of the old centres expanded. Arrangements were made for the distribution of powdered milk to children through centres and in schools.

Protected water supply was provided in six towns, and work started for the establishment of waterworks in four other towns. 13,000 small

tubewells were sunk for providing pure drinking water in the flood-affected areas of North Bihar.

Mention must be made here of the starting of thirty Family Planning Clinics in the State. Arrangements were also made for imparting instruction to married women attending the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres and Health Centres in community projects and N. E. S. areas. This must be regarded as a development having considerable significance for the future, for the mortality rate is likely to fall still further and the rate of population growth would become even faster than it is already if steps were not taken to bring down the size of families.

The number of hospitals and dispensaries increased from 738 to 855 and the number of beds from 4,256 to 5,862. All district hospitals were improved and expanded during this period. There was also considerable expansion and improvement in the hospitals attached to the Medical Colleges at Patna and Darbhanga. A new building with 250 beds for a surgical unit known as the Rajendra Surgical Block, which is considered to be one of the best equipped of its kind in the country, was added to the Patna Medical College Hospital.

There has also been considerable expansion of facilities for medical and public health education and training. The annual intake in the Medical degree course has been doubled, and steps taken for starting a new Medical College at Ranchi. Facilities have also been provided for post-graduate teaching in selected subjects at the Patna Medical College. A Health Institute has been started at Patna, and steps taken for training nurses, lady health visitors, midwives, and dais in large numbers.

GRĀM PANCHĀYATS

The number of Panchāyats, which stood at 1,424 at the commencement of the plan, had risen to 6,521 in 1956 excluding 2,181 unofficial Panchāyats. Over 200 Panchāyats were entrusted with the work of collecting land revenue in addition to their normal duties and in some areas grain-golas were organized by Panchāyats for making grain available to cultivators on credit at the time of sowing. In the districts of Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Monghyr and Saran, Panchāyats were entrusted with the construction of flood protection embankments and no less than 235 miles of such embankments were constructed through their agency. The Panchāyats also organized

village volunteer forces for watch and ward duties and social reconstruction work.

HOUSING

Steps were taken for the first time during 1951-6 for the improvement of the housing conditions of industrial workers, Harijans, and municipal sweepers. Loans amounting to over a crore of rupees were advanced to a number of industrial units for the construction of suitable houses for their workers, and in most cases, the construction of these houses had been completed or nearly completed by 1956. Satisfactory progress was made also with the schemes for the construction of houses for municipal sweepers, the entire cost of which was met by the State Government, and with the scheme for the construction of houses for landless Harijans where 25 per cent of the cost in the shape of labour or readily available materials was contributed by beneficiaries, and the remaining 75 per cent by the State Government.

WELFARE OF TRIBAL AND BACKWARD CLASSES

The policies that were initiated during 1947-51 for the amelioration of the condition of Scheduled tribes, Scheduled castes, and other backward classes continued to operate during the First Five-Year Plan. Over 61,000 stipends were awarded to students belonging to Scheduled tribes and Scheduled castes, and over 25,000 stipends to students belonging to backward classes during 1951-6. Schools, maktabs, and hostels were also provided for the convenience of students belonging to Scheduled tribes, Scheduled castes, and other backward communities at different places. Over 300 grain-golas were set up in the tribal areas for supplying grain to the tribal population on easy terms when needed. A common Cultural Board has been formed for the preservation and advancement of different tribal languages and cultures, and a Tribal Research Institute established at Ranchi for conducting research in the customs, manners, languages, and cultures of the tribal people.

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute was formally constituted in 1950 for research in medieval and ancient Indian history and the institute has been engaged in editing Buddhist manuscripts brought from Tibet, conducting excavations at Kumhrar and other places near Patna, and writing a history of the freedom movement in Bihar.

An institute now known as Nava Nālandā Mahāvihāra was established in 1955 close to the site of the ancient university at Nālandā for higher studies in Pāli and Buddhist culture. This institute has an international character and is attracting students and teachers from many Buddhist countries, such as Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, China, Japan and so on. It provides post-graduate courses in Pāli and Buddhist philosophy and has arrangements for teaching Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan, besides other languages. The institute is also engaged in research work and has undertaken the publication of the Pāli Tripitika in the Devanāgri script. It may be noted that the Chinese Government has presented the relics of Yuan Chwang to the Nālandā Institute and about five lac rupees for building a suitable monument.

Another institute known as the Mithilā Institute has been set up at Darbhanga for higher studies and research in Sanskrit. This institute also collects old manuscripts and publishes research papers and unpublished works in Sanskrit. It has a large number of new publications to its credit. The Maharajah of Darbhanga has donated a total of about five lakh rupees to this institute.

Preliminary steps were taken in 1955 for the establishment of a Prākṛit institute near Vaiśālī for post-graduate studies in Ahiṁsā, research in the Prākrit language and literature, and in Jaina philosophy. It is now working at full speed and Shri Shanti Prasad Jain has donated on behalf of the Jaina community a total of six lakhs and twenty-five thousand rupees for buildings and so on.

An institute for post-graduate studies and research in Arabic and Persian was proposed to be established in 1955 with the Khuda Bux Library as the centre.

A rural institute for providing higher education on a basic pattern was established at Turki in September 1955, and a college of Physical Education started at Patna.

The Constitution provides that the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in the Devanāgri script. The Bihar Rāshṭra Bhāshā Parishad was established towards the end of 1950 generally for the development of the Hindi language, and more particularly for the publication of useful books dealing with arts, science, and technical subjects in Hindi and in the other important regional languages and dialects of Bihar. The Institute has published a large number of original works in Hindi, and has already established a high reputation as a centre for research in Hindi and in the regional languages and dialects of Bihar.

MUSIC, DANCE AND DRAMA

In ancient times, Patna was a great centre of music and drama. The simmerings of a new cultural awakening began to be felt all over Bihar with the advent of freedom, and clubs and parties began to be organized for putting on stage performances and musical soirées. A music department was started in the Patna University in 1947, and in 1949, Government decided to organize Mod Mandalis which gave dramatic performances, skits, musical items, etc., in the countryside. A Cultural Grants Committee was set up after this in 1951 for the distribution of grants among institutions devoted to music, dance, drama and the histrionic arts with the help of this Committee. This was followed by the establishment of the Bihar Academy of Music, Dance, and Drama in 1952 for fostering and developing these arts in Bihar. This academy gives assistance to organizations devoted to art and culture in Bihar and also looks after the organization of cultural shows on the anniversary of Independence Day. A number of private organizations such as the Sangeet Mandal. the Rabindra Sangeet Parishad, and the Bhārtiya Nṛitya Kalā Mandir have also been actively engaged in promoting the arts of music and dance and other cultural activities in the State.

BHARAT SEWAK SAMĀJ

The Bihar State Bhārat Sewak Samāj was inaugurated on 6 August 1953, one year after the establishment of the Central Bhārat Sewak Samāj, as the people's sector of the Five-Year Plan, in order to invite the co-operation of all sections of the people in the task of nation building and social service and to provide facilities and opportunities for such service.

The success which the Samāj achieved within a short span of time gave promise of its promoting the growth of the people's initiative over a wide area throughout the Pradesh. The Organization in the very beginning took up some important programmes in the field of public co-operation such as projects like the Kosi, and worked them out successfully.

The Bhārat Sewak Samāj programme generally includes the following activities:—

(1) Sanitation and Health
(2) Enlightenment about the Five-Year Plan
(3) Economic Development:—
    (a) Major Projects
    (b) Local Development Works

(c) Cottage and Village Industries
(d) Other Constructive Activities
(4) Social Welfare (Welfare of Women and Children)
(5) Appati Sevā (Emergency Relief)
(6) Raising Social and Civic Standards:—
(a) Removal of Social Inequalities
(b) Prohibition
(c) Anti-corruption
(d) Anti-adulteration
(7) Cultural Activities
(8) Work Camps:—
(a) For students and other youths and
(b) For educated unemployed.
(9) Studies and Surveys.

The State Bhārat Sewak Samāj with branches in all the districts of the Pradesh, all the sub-divisions of the districts, and in 398 out of 477 thanas, and several villages, gives top priority to sanitation and anti-corruption programmes in view of the fact that no nation-building programme is expected to achieve success unless our people are healthy, both physically and morally.

HEALTH AND SANITATION

Yogāsan :—The State Bhārat Sewak Samāj has opened several Yogāsan centres all over the State. Young and old are trained in Yogāsan exercises. In Patna itself, the headquarters of the State, there are Yogāsan centres at Birla Mandir, the Bhārat Scouts and Guides office, and the office of the Camp Section of the Samāj (Medicine Market).

Sanitation Drives:—To educate the masses regarding the principles of social hygiene and environmental sanitation and to arouse mass enthusiasm for the purpose, the State Bhārat Sewak Samāj has been conducting two sanitation drives every year. These drives have been evoking public co-operation and response whenever and wherever they have been launched.

ANTI-CORRUPTION

Since the very inception of the Samāj, the Secretary, Anti-Corruption Section, has been devoting considerable time and energy to root out corruption from society in whichever shape or form it may be found existing.

PUBLIC CO-OPERATION IN BIG AND SMALL PROJECTS

The Samāj has had outstanding success in the Kosi Bund project. At the instance of the Samāj, the land required for the construction of embankments at Kosi was surrendered by the people without waiting for the formalities of land acquisition. The rate on which the estimate was based was about Rs 41.8 as. per thousand cubic feet of earthwork. Against this, the work turned out by the Bhārat Sewak Samāj cost only Rs 33 to Rs 36 per thousand cubic feet, which means a saving of over 16 percent. It has been estimated that the value in money of the *Shramdān* performed by the Bhārat Sewak Samāj workers is about Rs 4 lakhs.

The branches of the Samāj have been also busy sponsoring small local Development Schemes which are implemented partly by the grants received from the Planning Commission and partly through the people's co-operation. The Samāj has now increased its sphere of activities and has decided to work with greater zeal for Co-operative Cottage and Village Industries and several other programmes necessary for the rebuilding of India.

Student and Youth Camps— The State Bhārat Sewak Samāj has opened a special section which carries the message of national reconstruction to students and youth.

From May 1954 to 31 December 1956 the State Bhārat Sewak Samāj held a number of student and youth camps throughout the State:—Boys—87 with 6,063 Campers, Girls—8 with 450 campers, Training Camps—4 with 203 campers, total 99 with 6,716 Campers.

The number of students and youths who performed labour and social service at these camps is about 5,000 and 9,31,196. C.F.T. earthwork was done by campers through *Shramdān*.

Mahilā Section—The Mahilā Section of the Samāj works for the welfare of women and children. It has organized a number of maternity centres and various institutions for carrying on constructive work and cultural activities. Smt. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the then Union Minister for Health, gave a grant of Rs 5,000 for carrying on activities for the welfare of women and children through conducting maternity centres.

This in outline is the nature of the work done by the Samāj in Bihar.

Community Development and the National Extension Service

The problem of all-round rural and agricultural development had

been engaging the minds of the leaders of the Indian National Congress for a long time. A number of experiments in rural development had been conducted in different parts of the country and schemes of rural development were taken up when the Congress formed ministries in Bihar and several other provinces. In most of these schemes, rural development work was thought of largely in terms of particular items, of improvement in village life and in cultivation, and there was, generally speaking, lack of a co-ordinated approach to village life as a whole. The magnitude of the efforts needed to create any effective impact on the problem was also not fully realized, and the funds allotted for rural development work were wholly inadequate.

A committee known as the Grow More Food Enquiry Committee was appointed by the Government of India under the Chairmanship of Shri T. K. Krishnamachari in February 1952 to enquire into the efficacy of the grow-more-food programme, and to examine and report on any matter relevant to the problem of increasing food production. This committee expressed the view that agricultural improvement was an integral part of a much wider problem of raising the level of rural life, and no lasting improvement could be expected unless the grow-more-food campaign was so enlarged as to cover a wider plan for the development of village life in all its aspects. It recommended the organization of a permanent nation-wide extension service to assist in the implementation of a co-ordinated programme of rural development with the willing participation and help of the people, and for bringing about such a large-scale expansion of agricultural production as will assure to an increasing population progressively rising levels of nutrition. A pilot extension scheme of this type was actually started at Bikram in May 1952 with generous help from the Ford Foundation. Five pilot community development projects were started the same year on 2 October. The national extension service scheme prepared by the Krishnamachari Committee was sanctioned towards the middle of 1953, and four national extension service blocks were set up in Bihar on the anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birthday that very year.

The basic ideas underlying the community development and the national extension service schemes are (*i*) that no rural development programme can have any chance of success unless the people accept its objectives, share in its making, regard it as their own and are prepared to make the sacrifices necessary for implementing it; (*ii*) no lasting improvement in agriculture or rural life can be expected

if the different aspects are treated in isolation, and the programme therefore should cover village life in all its aspects, and (*iii*) when different departments of Government approach the village each from its own viewpoint, the effect is apt to be confusing. The approach to the villager should be made not through a multiplicity of developmental officers but through an agent common at least to the principal departments engaged in rural work. The community development programme was conceived primarily as one of intensive development of selected areas through community efforts, which would also contribute to raising the level of agricultural production. It covered besides development of agriculture, animal husbandry, and co-operation, also village communications, social education, the expansion and improvement of primary and secondary education and the improvement of public health.

The total Governmental expenditure on the five pilot community projects which were started in different areas of Bihar in 1952-3 exceeded rupees three crores. The people's contribution in the shape of cash, material, and labour towards the execution of the community development programme in the same period was in excess of the expenditure incurred by Government. The national extension service scheme provides for the establishment of extension blocks consisting of about 100-120 villages. Bihar will have a total of 572 blocks when the scheme is extended to the entire State, and by the end of the plan period, 87 national extension services covering an area of 12,000 sq. miles and a population of over 71 lakhs or a little over 1/6th of the total State's population will have been set up. Each national extension service block has a block development officer, extension officers for agriculture, animal husbandry, and co-operation, two social education organizers and an overseer, besides one village level worker for every 10 villages. The main obstacle to the speedy implementation of the community development and N.E.S. programmes was lack of trained personnel. Facilities for training in agriculture, animal husbandry, co-operation, social education and extension methods had to be rapidly expanded or created where no such facilities existed before to meet the requirements of staff for these schemes.

Before we conclude this brief survey of Bihar in the post-independence period, some mention must be made of the developments that have taken place in the administrative sphere, when there is all-round expansion of the activities of Government, the abolition

of zamindars and the decision to establish a permanent national extension service which would contact every farmer and assist in the co-ordinated development of rural life through community efforts under the impact of the ideals of justice and democracy enshrined in the Constitution of India. During the British régime, Government had no administrative agency of their own in the village, and indeed, there was no subordinate administrative agency below the Subdivisional officer, though for purposes of law and order, each subdivision was divided into a number of police stations, each under a police officer of the rank of a Sub-Inspector. The Subdivisional Officer, as also the District Officer and other administrative and executive officers at district and subdivisional headquarters had to try cases and perform other judicial work besides being responsible for all revenue and administrative work. The size of the districts and subdivisions in Bihar was also too large to permit easy contact between the people and the district and subdivisonal staff, and the volume of work in districts and subdivisions had been continuously on the increase for a long period.

The establishment of Village Panchāyats endowed with a large measure of authority in civic matters and also other spheres and based on full adult suffrage to which references have been made earlier, was part of a general policy to decentralise administrative authority and to build up local self-government institutions from the bottom. The separation of judiciary and executive functions which started a little later was another important measure of administrative reform which was calculated to relieve the burden on the administrative agencies of Government and decentralise authority. The abolition of zamindars and the all-round expansion of Governmental activities made it absolutely imperative to provide subordinate administrative agencies and to delegate necessary authority to them to deal with local problems. It was accordingly decided in 1952 to divide the whole State into a number of circles or anchals each under a gazetted officer who would be responsible for the collection of revenues payable to Government and also for the execution of the programme of welfare and development in the area under his charge. The National Extension Service scheme was sanctioned one year later by the Government of India, and this necessitated a good deal of modification in the Anchal Adhikari scheme. The modified scheme provides for the constitution of 574 National Extension Service blocks and Anchals in the State, each covering about 100 villages with an average

population of 66,000. The gazetted officer in charge of the block cum Anchal is responsible for revenue and general administration work in addition to his duties as block development officer, but he is not expected to perform any magisterial and judicial functions. The duties and responsibilities of district and subdivisional officers have been redefined and they have been made responsible for the co-ordination and supervision of development programmes in their respective jurisdictions. The responsibility for the initiation and execution of development programmes in different fields rests with the officers of the development departments concerned who are also expected to provide technical and a certain measure of administrative supervision; but the district and subdivisional officers are expected to ensure that there is no overlapping or conflict between the activities and programmes of different departments, and that the execution of development programmes is not held up for technical reasons or for want of public co-operation.

A very significant development has taken place in the last few years in the increasing association of the public with administration, particularly in respect of the development and welfare schemes. Thus a large number of committees and councils have been formed at different levels. Mention may be made here of the District Development Council which is concerned with all matters relating to the programme of development in the district and Advisory Committees, Community Projects and National Extension Service Blocks which are charged with the responsibility of formulating the programme of work in the blocks and also for general supervision. As was indicated earlier, one of the basic assumptions of the community development and N.E.S. schemes is that no rural development programme can have any chance of success unless the people accept its objectives and share in the making of the programme and also in its execution. The Advisory Committees in community development and national extension areas, therefore, have a very vital role to play in the new set-up.

Though the execution of the First Five-Year Plan was beset with many difficulties in the initial stages to some of which reference has been made in earlier paragraphs, progress was rapid in the last two years of the plan period, and the preparation of a more ambitious Second Five-Year Plan was taken in hand early in 1955 in a mood of buoyancy and hope.

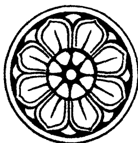
Buddha Jayanti

The 2,500th anniversary of the Buddha which was observed in 1956 was naturally an occasion for great rejoicing in Bihar where the Buddha had spent many years of his life, and which has some of the most sacred places of Buddhist pilgrimage in the world, namely, Bodh Gaya, Rajgriha, and Vaiśālī. Thousands of pilgrims from Ceylon, Burma, Tibet, Thailand, and other Buddhist countries including the Dalai and Panchen Lamas of Tibet and many other distinguished savants and leaders visited the places of Buddhist pilgrimage in Bihar, and this has no doubt brought about a certain amount of cultural awakening among the people and also an awareness in their minds of India's link with the countries of South-East Asia, Tibet, China, and the Far East. Bodh Gaya, Rajgriha, and Nālandā which were lying in a state of neglect for many centuries, were renovated and improved, and necessary facilities were provided for the accommodation, transport, and medical care of pilgrims.

Sarvodaya and Bhoodan

This narrative will be incomplete without some reference to the Sarvodaya and Bhoodan movements. The latter movement can be regarded as an offshoot of the former, but it is important enough to call for separate mention. The Sarvodaya movement is based on Gandhian ideals and aims at an all-round progress of the people largely through their own efforts. It attaches considerable importance to the revival and development of village industries and khadi. Although this movement is in its infancy, it has considerably influenced the minds and thoughts of a large number of people in Bihar, as in the country generally and should be recognized as being one of the powerful under-currents shaping the country's evolution. The Bhoodan movement originated in 1951, when Sri Vinoba Bhave, one of Gandhiji's foremost disciples decided to organize a movement for the solution of the land problem through non-violence, on seeing the plight of the landless in Telangana and the atmosphere of violence and hatred generated there by Communist propaganda. The Bhoodan movement in Bihar started on 14 September 1952 when Sri Vinobaji set up his camp in the village of Durgāvati in Shahabad district. From Durgāvati, he walked on foot through the districts of Shahabad, Patna, Saran, Gaya, Palamau, Ranchi and Singhbhum, and then halted for some time in Chandil in the Manbhum district where he fell ill,

He resumed his journey after his recovery from illness, and coveerd the remaining part of the Manbhum district and the districts of Hazaribagh, Monghyr, Santhal Parganas, Bhagalpur, Purnea, Saharsa, Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur and Champaran. Some areas were visited by him more than once. He thus journeyed on foot for 839 days through Bihar, covering a distance of 5,547 miles. Wherever he went, he preached that land, like the sun, the air and water, was the gift of God and nobody should claim to be its lord, and those who had land should share it with their landless brethren. This appeal had considerable success. Much of the bitterness and violence that had arisen over land disputes disappeared, and 2,14,745 landholders donated a total of 23,08,479 acres of land. A very large proportion of the land thus donated consists of uncultivated lands, but the spectacle of people including zamindars who had only recently lost heavily on account of the abolition of zamindaris, donating large areas of land for distribution among the landless had a great moral effect. Though the Bhoodan movement has not solved the problem of the landless, it has created an atmosphere in which a just solution of the land problem might be achieved in the usual democratic way without bloodshed.



EPILOGUE

HERE is a panoramic view of the story of the people of Bihar and the land they have been occupying for the last three thousand years and more, for which some kind of record is available. Republics and empires have come and gone, systems of administration have been tried and replaced, changes have taken place in religious beliefs and creeds, languages have formed and reformed, arts have flourished and decayed, but the stream of human life, like the very Ganges that passes through Bihar, has flowed on and on, seeking fulfilment of economic, social, aesthetic and moral urges and ideals which have swayed the people here from time to time.

During their long endeavour to express themselves fully, the people here have thrown up great systems of thought, the dialectics and inter-relations of which have yet to be fully brought out. They once led India in religion and culture and were responsible for taking Buddhism, an offshoot of Sanatana Dharma, to remote corners of Asia. They have produced some mighty figures who can rank not only as some of the greatest in India but can easily be styled as world figures. They were pioneers in conducting republics and in building India-wide empires. They were also teachers of art and leaders in organizing big educational institutions. None but the Maithilis of Bihar have been able to preserve without break the traditions of Sanskrit learning for such a long and continuous period as three thousand years.

While these and other achievements spotlight the brilliant days and moonlit nights of Bihar's glory, there have been also very dark and gloomy periods when Bihar went down and was almost inglorious and forgotten. But again her people have risen and along with their brothers and sisters in India, have made a mark in recent history. The life of the people has marched on undeterred by any obstacles. The great past achievements have been able to inspire confidence and have been the cause of pride and prestige. The darker periods

too should draw our attention and be the subject of deeper study, in order that avoidable mistakes and causes of failure in the past may be avoided in future.

The several writers who have contributed to this book have laboured hard to draw a picture as best they could. It cannot, however, be said that the picture is by any means full, because the material which was available for long periods was sometimes practically *nil*. It may be that as time passes, more light can be thrown and a fuller story written. In the meanwhile, this task had to be undertaken, and it may now be said that the attempt was worth making.

The history of Bihar, as of India, has not come to a stop like that of many forgotten countries and dead civilizations. India is still a vital and a creative nation, and the best proof of it was the unique way Indians fought freedom's battle under the inspiring guidance of Gandhiji, and won it against the mightiest of empires. The worthy part Biharis played in it, is still fresh in the memory of India.

But it should be remembered that the past is always 'only a past' and we cannot afford to be lost in it unless we want to reduce ourselves to mummies. Out of the past, almost leaning on it, rises the present, and life projects itself into the future.

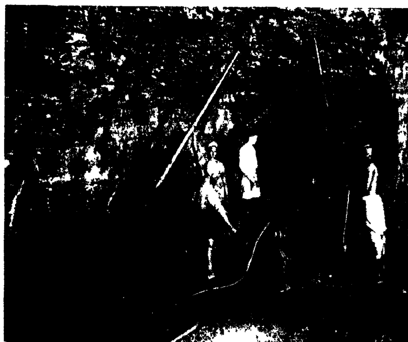
Let this picture drawn in 'Bihar Through The Ages' serve as a reminder of the glorious past. At the same time, let it inspire a vision of the future and fill everyone with the confidence that people who have done great things can repeat them again and achieve perhaps greater things than before. Therein would lie the fulfilment of those who have toiled hard to draw the outline of a picture of the past of a simple, rural and hospitable people who have been endowed with the rare gift of faith, and who have always responded and owed ungrudging allegiance to great leaders and noble ideals.



A fissure caused by earthquake
1934 Fig. 1



A railway track after earthquake :
1934 Fig 2



Coal mining in Bihar Fig. 3

Plate II



A Uraon boy
[FIG. 4



A Uraon girl
[FIG. 5



A Munda youth
Fig 6



A group of Uraon dancers
FIG.

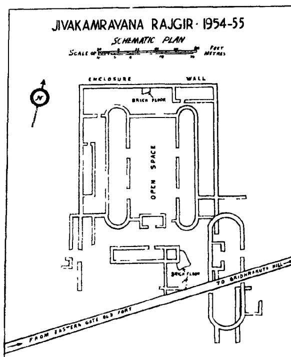


A Birhor hut FIG. 8



FIG. 9

Plate IV



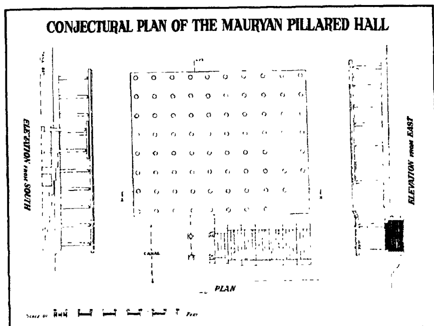
Jivak-amravana at Rajgir

FIG. 10



Jivak-amravana Ground plan, Rajgir

FIG. 11



Plan of the Mauryan pillared hall at Kumrahar (Patna) FIG. 12



Mauryan pillared hall at Kumrahar (Patna) FIG. 13

Plate VI



Lion Capital, Asoka Pillar at Rampurva Champaran
[FIG 14



Bull Capital, Asoka Pillar at Rampurva Champaran
FIG. 15

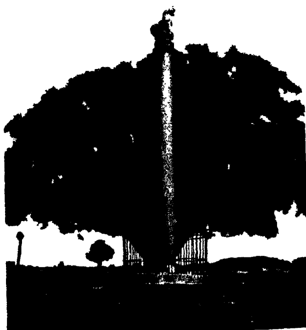
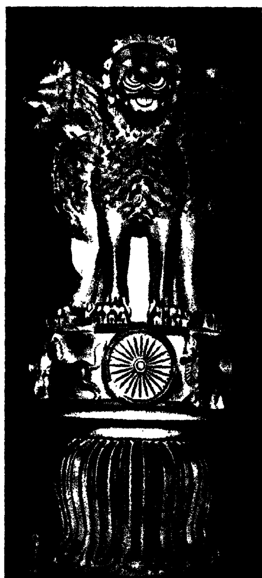


FIG. 16

Asoka Pillar, Lauriya Nandangarh (Champaran)

FIG. 17



Lion Capital, Sarnath



Yaksha statue
Fig. 18



Yakshi from Didarganj
Patna Museum Fig. 19



Jain image from Lohanipur
(Patna Museum) Fig. 20



Laughing boy -Terracotta
Fig.



Nagi deity, Mamarmath, Rajgir Fig. 22



Dancer from Bulandibagh Fig. 23



Asoka in remorse—original based on sculpture Fig. 21

Key to Plate X — Fig 25

Nos 1-15: Gupta Gold Coins: Weight varies between
120 to 127 grains.
16–18: Cast and punch-marked coins
20–21: Legends in Gupta characters

1 Obv: King Chandragupta making a present to his bride, *Kumāradevī*
Under left arm of the King, *Chandra*, behind the Queen, *Kumāradevī*
Rev Ambikā seated on lion couchant to right; legend, *Lichchhavayah*

2. Obv: King Samudragupta standing, spear in left hand and offering oblations by right, Garuḍa banner in front Legend blurred
Rev. Goddess seated on high-backed throne, legend, *Parākramaḥ*

3. Obv: Sacrificial horse of Asvamedha before the sacrificial *Yupa*, letter si under him, circular legend, *Rājādhirājah prithivīmavitvā*
Rev. Queen Dattadevī standing with *Chouri* on her shoulder, legend, *Asvamedha-parakramah*

4. Obv King Samudragupta seated on couch and playing on lyre, legend, *Mahārājādhirājaśrīsamudraguptah*
Rev: Goddess seated on wicker stool with cornucopia in left hand, legend, *Samudraguptah.*

5 Obv Samudragupta standing and shooting an arrow at tiger before him, legend, *Vyāghraparākramah.*
Rev Goddess standing with lotus in left hand, legend, same as on obverse

6. Obv Samudragupta standing to left with battle-axe in left hand attendant before him legend, *Kritāntaparasurjayatyajitarājajetājitah*
Rev: Goddess seated on Chouki, legend, *Kritāntaparaśuh*

7 Obv: Chandragupta II standing with bow in left hand and arrow in right, *Chandra* between the bow and the bow-string Circular legend blurred
Rev: Goddess seated on Chouki, legend, *Śrī vikramah*

8 Obv: Chandragupta II shooting arrow at retreating lion
Rev. Goddess seated on lion Legend blurred

9. Obv Chandragupta II standing before Chakrapurusha and receiving *prasāda*
Rev: Goddess standing on *makara* head, legend, *Chakravikramah*

10 Obv Chandragupta II standing, with an umbrella-bearer behind him
Rev Goddess standing on lotus with lotus in left hand

11 Obv Chandragupta II riding on a horse, carrying bow, legend blurred
Rev Goddess seated on a wicker stool and feeding a peacock

12 Obv. Kumāragupta I riding a horse and attacking with a sword a rhinoceros standing at bay Legend blurred
Rev Goddess standing on a *makara* and taking a flower offered by it An umbrella-bearer behind her

13. Obv Kumāragupta I in monk's dress, standing in centre, with a general and a lady arguing violently with him Circular legend unread
Rev: Lakshmī seated on lotus, legend, *Apratighah*

14. Obv Kumāragupta I, standing and feeding peacock Circular legend not completely read
Rev Kārtikeya on peacock, legend, *Śrī Mahendrakumārah*

15 Obv. Kumāragupta I riding a furious elephant which is about to trample a lion on the ground the lion is trying to bite the hind-leg of the elephant, attendant behind the king
Rev: Goddess feeding peacock, legend, *Simhanihantā Mahendragajah*

16. Obv: Copper cast coin, *c* 300 B C Obv: Elephant,
Rev: Three-arched hill

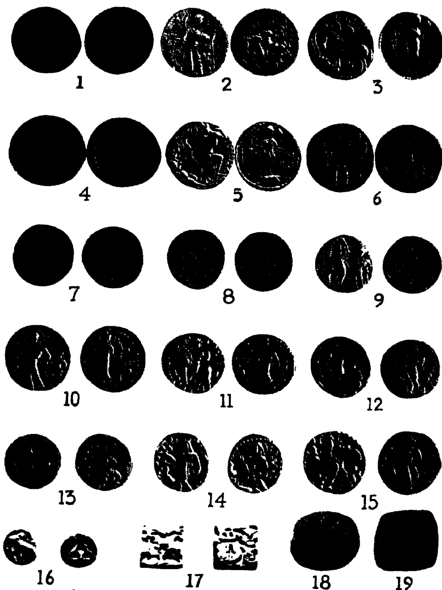
17. Square cast coin, Obv: Several symbols, including elephant to right
Rev. Several symbols, including Three-arched hill, Hollow-cross, etc

18. Punch-marked silver coin, obverse side Several symbols

19. Punch-marked silver coin: Obverse. Several symbols

20. Aśvamedha coin legend of Samudragupta in Upagiti metre
Rājādhirājah prithivīmavitvā divam jayatyāhritavājimedhah.

21. Legend on the battle-axe type of Samudragupta in Prithvi metre,
Kritāntaparaśurjayatyajitarājajetājitah

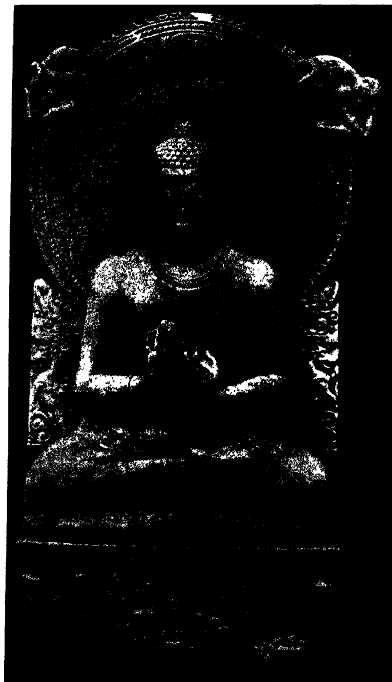


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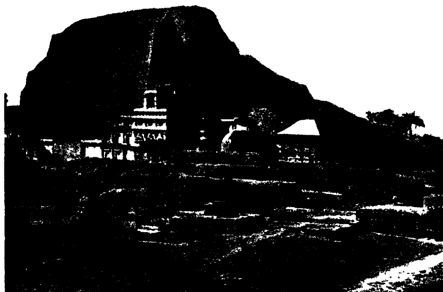
21

Gupta coins

Fig. 25



Seated Buddha, Jnanamudra, Sarnath [Fig. 26

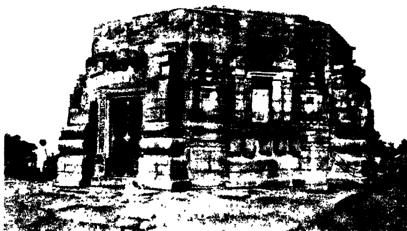


Main Stupa, Nalanda FIG. 27



Stone temple, site No. 2, Nalanda FIG. 28

Plate XIII



Mundesvari Devi temple Ramgarh Champan   Fig. 29

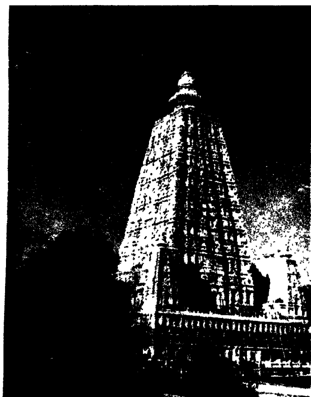


Fig. 30

Bodh Gaya temple - Gaya



Bronze Buddha
Sultanganj Fig. 31



Marriage of Siva and Parvati
Fig. 32



Lady with a bird
Rajmahal

[Fig. 33



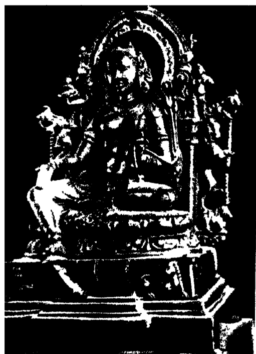
Dancing Ganesh
[Fig. 34

Plate XV



Fig.

Ruins of Nalanda Monastery



Bronze image of seated Tara

Fig. 36



Mahadeva temple at Khekpatra



Seated Avalokitesvara Bronze image FIG. 38



Standing Avalokitesvara Bronze image FIG. 39



FIG. 40

Malik Ibrahim Bayu's Mausoleum, Bihar Sharif



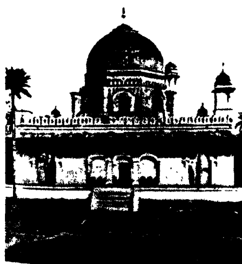
Sher Shah's Mausoleum, Sasaram Fig. 41



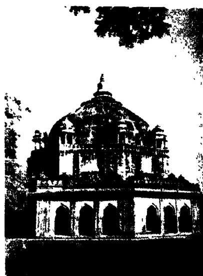
Shah Daulat's Mausoleum, Maner Fig. 42



Sher Shah's Mosque Patna City FIG. 43

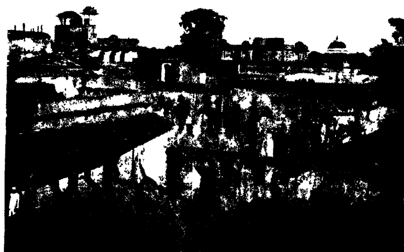


Shamsher Khan's tomb, Shamshernagar FIG. 44

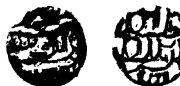


Hasan Khan's tomb FIG. 45

Plate XIX



Mansingh's palace Rohtasgarh — Fig. 46



Copper coin of Muhammad Sh...
Sharqui of Jaunpur — Fig. 48



A calligraphic specimen Wasli of
Raja Ram Narayan — Fig. 47



Copper coin of Ibrahim S...
Sharqui of Jaunpur — Fig. [illegible]



Portraits of Saiyid Hussain Ali Khan and
Abdul Quadir, Bedil

FIG. 50

Babu Kunwar Singh

Birsa Bhagwan

Plate XXI



Betrothal of Shah Jehan, illustration from Tarikh-i-Khandan Fig 52



A painting of Sher Shah Fig 51



Birsa Bhagwan FIG. 53



Babu Kunwar Singh FIG. 54

Plate XXIII



Guru Govind Singh [Fig. ?]



Mahatma Gandhi and Kasturba at Champaran — Fig. 56

Plate XXV



Mahatma Gandhi and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan during Bihar riots—1947 Fig. 57

Plate XXVI

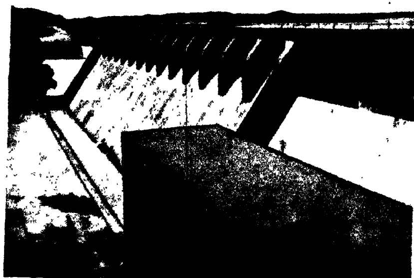


Vinobaji during Bhoodan tour in Bihar [Fig. 58

Plate XXIX



Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, for Pali and Buddhism Fig. 62



Tilaiya Dam and Power House Fig. 63

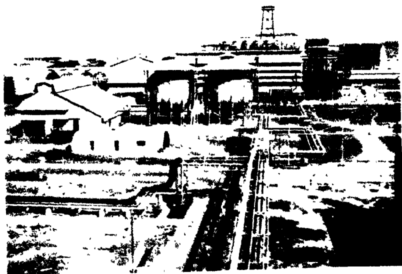


Konar Dam FIG. 64



Bokaro Thermal Station FIG. 65

Plate XXXI



Sindri Fertiliser Factory — FIG. 66



Tata Iron and Steel Works — FIG. 67



Zenana. Patna Painting FIG. 68

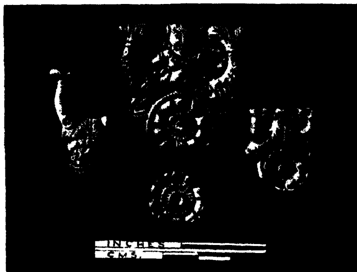


Holi. Patna Painting FIG. 69

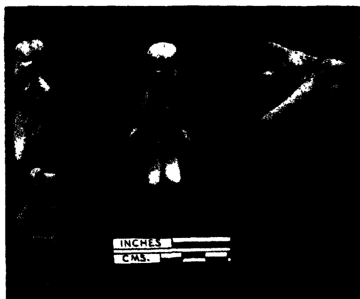
Plate XXXIII



Chandragupta II (from a coin) [FIG.]



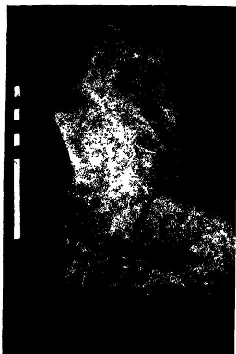
Sunga Terracotta, recent discovery, Patna City [FIG. 71



Terracotta Figurines, Patna City [FIG. 72



Mauryan polished sandstone with Lotus motif, Shah Kamal Road, Patna City   FIG. 73



Mauryan sandstone couchant Bull, Shah K. Road, Patna City   FIG.



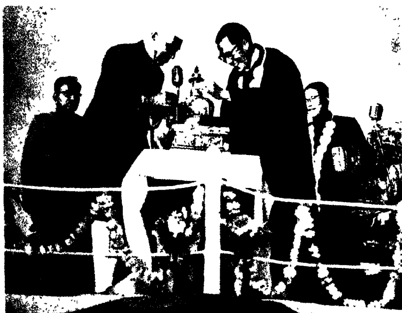
Lomasha Cave, Barabar Hills   FIG. 75



Yuan Chwang FIG. 76



Gold casket containing relics of Yuan Chwang presented by China to India
FIG. 77



The Dalai Lama presenting the relics of Yuan Chwang to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru [FIG. 78

GLOSSARY

The Glossary is not meant to be exhaustive. Only words which may not be found in Dictionaries or words which are used in some special sense have been given with equivalents.

Abā	Cloak
Ābkash	Water-pot
Ābre Seyāh	Black Cloud
Achit	Non-spirit, matter
Adhovastra	Undergarment
Adhyatmavidya	Knowledge of the Supreme Spirit or Atman
Āftāb	Ewer, water jug
Āg	Fire
Aghan	Indian month, roughly November-December
Agiā Baitāl	Hideous demon that lurks in trees
Ahar	Irrigation tank made by a dam
Ahiṁsā	Non-injury to any living being
Ahl-i-Qalām	Litterateurs; Nobility
Ahl-i-Saif	Knights; Military nobility
Ājivika	Pre-Buddhistic order of monks
Ajlaf	Lower of the two social divisions among Indian Muslims
Akārat	Useless; purposeless; wasteful
Akhāra (Akhra)	Dancing-ground in Adivasi villages
Akshaya Tritiya	Third day of the bright half of Vaiśākh, which is supposed to be the first day of the Satya-yuga; very auspicious for the undertaking of any new programme which is ensured success if then performed
Altamgha	Rent-free grant of land under the King's seal
Amama	Turban
Ambarkhana	Store-house
Amin	Revenue officer
Amla	Officer
Anal Haque	I am the Truth
Ānanda	Bliss; also the closest disciple of Buddha
Angarkhā	Long light-fitting coat
Angā	Coat or upper garment
Angiā	Bodice
Anirvāsita	Non-excluded ones
Annadā	Literally, giver of food; a name of the goddess Durga or Chandi when giving alms to her husband, Śiva
Apabhraṁśa	The Prākrit language of the later period; the third stage of the Middle Indo-Aryan (or Prākrit) languages
Arabaeen	Forty

Bihari	Collective term used by Dr Grierson to describe the three languages of Bihar viz., Bhojpuri, Maghi and Maithili
Bir	Hero; heroic
Birsa Bhagwan	Great Munda socio-religious leader who led two revolts against British authority at the turn of the present century. He came to be called Bhagwan by his followers and admirers
Bitlaha	Extreme form of social boycott among Santhals for breach of rules of clan exogamy and tribal endogamy
Bodhi-ghara	Shrine of the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya
Bodhimandap	Seat or platform on which the Buddha received his enlightenment at Bodh Gaya; it later became an object of regular worship by Buddhist pilgrims
Bodhisattva	Person (or persons) destined to be born as Buddha in future lives
Bonga	A mysterious impersonal power like 'Mana', worshipped by Adivasis
Boria	Mat
Bowries	Some seeds etc. used as coins
Brahnā	Naked
Buddha pada	Status of Buddha, poem about Buddha
Buddha pāda	Feet of Buddha
Burqā	Face-veil
Burn	Fairs held at certain places in the Munda area

C

Calitbhāshā	Style of literary Bengali based on the colloquial standard
Caryā songs	Mystic songs written in old dialects by Tāntric Buddhist teachers
Chaddar	Square shawl
Chaitya	Pre-Buddhistic monument associated with ashes or spirits of departed persons; probably the predecessor of stupas and later, of temples
Chalkaran	Movement of the Moon
Chander	Moon
Chāndini	White drugget
Chapkān	Long, tight-fitting coat
Charaṇa	Academy or college in Vedic and Sutra period
Charanpād	Feet
Charidar	Messenger of lower caste Pañchāyat
Charkhā	Spinning wheel
Chatāi	Literally a mat; Pañchāyat of lower castes comprising several villages
Chaturvyuha	Fourfold Vaishṇava divinity; worship of Vāsudeva, Balarāma, Pradyumna, and Anirudha as members of one divine family
Chaukidar	Village watchman
Chaurāsi	Union of eighty-four villages for purposes of Caste Pañchāyat
Chetiya	Shrine for Yaksha, Nāga, etc
Chhattham	Complete two-day fast
Chhinto	Sprinkle



Arahar	Pigeon Pea (cajanus indicus)
Ardhamāgadhi	The Prākrit language in which Jain Canonical Works are written
Arhat	Spiritual guide; the perfected man
Ārati	Circular swinging of light before a god or goddess; a form of honour and worship
Aśādha	First month of the monsoon; fourth month of the Hindu calendar
Āshramas	Stages of life; Brahmacharya, period of student life, Gārhastya, period of married life; Vānaprastha, period of preparation for retirement; and Sannyās, period of total renunciation: also hermitages
Aśroff	Higher of the two social divisions among Indian Muslims
Astān	Doorway
Aśvamedha	Horse-sacrifice
Austric Cults	Aboriginal cults which gave bloody offerings to Yakshas, Rākshasas etc
Avahattha	Stage of the Indo-Aryan language immediately before it took the form of vernaculars
'Āva Jāva Hai'	Comes and goes
Avidyā	Spiritual ignorance; illusion, false or faulty knowledge, the root-cause of all suffering and misery
Āwāgamana	Coming and going from this world,; Transmigration cycle of birth and death

B

Baggnikār	Musical scholar
Baiga	Village priest of the Cheros-Adivasi Tribe
Baisi	Union of 22 villages for purposes of a Caste Pañchāyat
Bakshi	Paymaster; a paymaster of troops
Bāli	Ear-ring
Bāqā	Everlasting life
Bāqā-Bilmāh	Rest in God
Barais	Seller or cultivator of betel leaves
Bārāmāsi	Ballads or short poems describing the sufferings of a [illegible] continuously separated from her husband
Bārāni	Sort of overcoat used in winter
Barkandāz	Armed retainers; armed policemen or other armed un-mounted employees of a civil department
Barobar	Equal
Ba Śāne Śearār	Like the spark
Ba Śra	Regular order
Bata-śuddhika	Adherents of the minor cults who practised purity by means of keeping the vows of a particular deity
Be Śra	Irregular order
Beyābān	Wilderness
Bayān karegā	Will explain or give a statement
Bhakti Mārg	Path of devotion to God
Bhāva	Acting, gesticulation; mood or any particular emotion
Bhikhu	Buddhist monk; one initiated in the religion of Buddha
Bhojpatra	Bark of birch tree used for writing

Chhooain	Touch
Chihil Satun	Place of forty pillars
Chikitsāvidyā	Medical Science
Chilla kashi	Shutting oneself up in a cell for a forty-day meditation
Chill Khānā	Calls for meditation
Chit	Primeval consciousness; consciousness; mind
Choghā	Long, loose, open-fronted coat
Cholā (choli)	Bodice
Choori	Glass bangles
Coss, also Kos	About two miles
Cowrie	Small shell formerly used as coin
Cutchery	Generic term for revenue office; office of administration; court-house

D

Daglā	Quilted waistcoat
Daig	Cauldron
Dakhl Karnā	To occupy
Dam	Coin, perhaps from drachm (Greek)
Damin-i-koh	Circle of hills
Dandi	Monk with a staff; name of an order of ascetics
Dangal	Wrestling bout
Dar	Gate
Darbār	Court or levee; hall of audience
Darogā	Police officer
Darvesh	Religious mendicant
Dastak	Permit or order, issued by Governor of Fort William, or other authorities which exempted goods from payment of customs
Dastar	Turban
Dastarbandi	Putting the turban on the head; initiation as a learned man
Devabhāshā	Sanskrit or Hindi; language of gods
Devāna (Diwāna)	Madman ; distracted
Deva-śilpa	Divine or cosmic creation
Dhamma	Religion; Pali form of Dharma
Dhandhankati	Rages, flares
Dhanwe-mahā	Festival of the bow, ancient folk-cult
Dharana	Bearing, supporting
Dhāri	Scavenger
Dharma-kāya	Dharma as the body of Buddha
Dharmānushasti	Laws of religion, rule according to religion
Dharma-pariprichchhā	Discussion of Dharma
Dharmas	The supreme being of the Oraon
Dhoti	Rectangular cloth worn round the waist by males in India
Dhughdhughia	Talisman worn on breast
Dhumkuria	Youth dormitory in Oraon village
Dhyāna	Meditation; contemplation
Diara	Sand and silt deposits formed by river currents
Digambar	One of the two main Jain sects, the other being Shwetāmbar; a naked mendicant
Digvijaya	Conquest of the world
Dil	Heart

Diza	Shirt used by unmarried girls
Dirham	Silver coin equivalent to five pence sterling
Diwān	'A native minister of the revenue department, and chief justice in civil cases within his jurisdiction.' Officer-in charge of revenue and finance
Diwani(y)	Functions of a diwan; Revenue and Fiscal administration
Dogamias	Of double origin
Dohara or Doha	Hindi couplet
Dama	Tanner
'Do manho tark Channo nā bhāti'	'Leave me alone. I do not like this'
Dopatta	Scarf
Doshālā	Textile made of two shawls sewn together
Dotāhi	Lined coat
Drāvyaka	Merchant carrying goods for sale
Drumnas	Coins
Duira	Church
Duni	Double
Dwaita	Dualistic system of thought and philosophy initiated by Madhwācharya (12th century)
Dwāpar	The third of the Four Ages of the world, the three others being Satya, Tretā and Kali (the last)
Dwija	Twice-born, one is physical birth and the other spiritual birth by initiation

E

Ekarāja	Monarchical state
Ektārā	One-stringed instrument

F

Faal	Augury
Fakir (Faqir)	Usually a Muhammadan mendicant
Fanā	Losing one's individuality, self-surrender
Fanā Fillah	Union with or merger in God
Farji (Farghul)	Fur coat used over Jāmā
Farman	Grant, order, decree, command, mandate or letter royal patent
Farsakh	Unit of measurement equal to about 18,000 feet
Fatiha	Prayer for the salvation of the dead
Fatuhi	Vest without fastening or sleeves
Fatwa	Religious decree or order
Faujdār	'Properly a military commander or a military governor of a district'; local or provincial executive officer
Fāzil	Degree for higher Arabic studies
Fiqāh	Islamic jurisprudence
Fotah	Small piece of cloth worn on legs like the gamcha

G

Gadar	Coat, larger and thicker than the qiba
Galim	Blanket
Gananā	Counting
Gandum	Wheat

Gāndhari	Middle Indo-Aryan (or Prākrit) dialect current in North-Western India
Gard	Dust
Garuda	Name of mythical vulture-like bird; vehicle of Vishnu
Gatyān	Bad condition
Gaulmika	Escort of police or soldiers
'Ghair Az'	Nothing but
Ghartaki	House-tax
Ghata	Cloud
Ghatak	Matchmaker; a unit
Ghatwals	Guardians of mountain passes
Ghazal	Persian poetic metre
Gileen	Of clay
Gomastā	Agent; subordinate rent-collector
Goni	Bag holding two-and-a-half maunds
Gotra	Lineage traced from ancient sage or Rishi
Grāma	Village
Gular	Kind of fruit
Guru	Spiritual guide; teacher
Guru-dakshinā	Fee given to preceptor
	H
Habs-i-Dam	Regulation of breath
Hādi or Halālkhor	Scavenger
Hairat Zadā	Struck with wonder
Hammām	Bath
Haqiqat	Reality; truth
Harcar	Spy
Harira (Harisa)	Kind of flummery made of milk, flour, etc
Harshāli	Burial ground of the Bhumij
Hāsva	Laughter, one of the nine sentiments in Sanskrit poetries
Hathayoga	System of yoga by which control of body and mind is established by purificatory processes and Asanas
Hetuvidyā	'Science of causes'; dialectics; logic
Hujrā	Cell
Hulul	Incarnation
	I
Ibrahim Mulek Bayo	Deity worshipped in some Bihar villages
Ihāmrga	Fabulous animals in early Indian Art
Imāmat	Succession to the Imām or to the office of Religious Chief
Iqta	Religion; Administrative unit in Turko-Afghan Period
Ishque	Love
Ismailia	The seveners; sub-sect of Shias
Ithnā Asgariyas	Twelvers; major sub-section of Shias
Itihāsa	History; historical ballads
	J
Jājam	Drugget
Jāli	Lattice or network
Jal-thal	Water, water everywhere; land and water
Jalwā	Ceremonial first sight of bridal pair
Jamā	All

Jāmā	Garment; long coat
Jāmā-i-Punbadar	Wadded Jāmā
Jamāt Khāna	Assembly room
Jambu-dvīpa	The central one of the seven continents surrounding the mountain Meru in India
Jamun	Name of a fruit (a kind of berry) common in parts of India
Jānapada-jana	Word used by Asoka to designate the masses of the country-folk
Jānapadī Vritti	Economic pursuits or arts and crafts
Jāria	Female slave
Jātakarma	Birth ceremony (consisting of touching newly-born child's tongue thrice with ghee after appropriate prayers)
Jāti	Caste
Jau	Barley
Jawāni	Youth
Jetha	Summer month, second in the Hindu Calendar
Jhulan	Dancing festival in honour of Krishna in the month of Sravana
Jhum	Shifting cultivation
Jilbāb	Scarf or wrapper
Jizia	Poll tax
Jnāna Mārg	Path of knowledge
Joghrāt	Curd, whey
Jubba	Long, loose shirt-like vest
Jurwa	State of being united

K

Kābā	The sacred place at Mecca
Kachhā	Unmetalled (road), unripe, uncooked
Kāchha	Underwear
Kāfir	Infidel, unbeliever
Kaftar	Witch
Kajmandra	Miraculous chantings
Kajomecin	Outcastes among the Hindus
Kalāwant	Artist, singer or musician
Kali	Last and worst of the four ages; the present age
Kallāl (Kalwar)	Distillers
Kamarband	Band round the waist
Kāmya Mārg	The path of religious rites and ceremonies performed with a desire for results
Kanchanis	Prostitutes
Kancholi	Bodice
Kangan	Bangle
Kaniz	Female slave
Kāpālika	Sect of Shaivism
Kārana	Because of, the cause, causal
Kareya	Men's ceremonial dress among tribals
Kārikā	Concise statement in verse of any doctrine
Karmā	Important Adivasi festival held in Bhādo or Bhādrapad
Karma Mārga	Path of action and performance of all religious rites and ceremonies in contrast to path of renunciation and meditation

Karśapana	Silver karśapana which weighed 32 rattis; it should be taken as roughly 2/5ths of a silver rupee of 80 ratti weight
Kāsht	Agricultural
Kāvya	Poem, poetry
Kāyotsarga	Standing pose of Jain Tirthankar while departing from this world; many Jain images are in this pose
Kevalin	One possessing the highest knowledge; epithet for Jain Tirthankar
Khādim	Servant
Khāk	Dust, ashes
Khālsa	Crown land, Sikh soldier, Sikh army
Khanda	Ditch
Khanyādhyaksha	Superintendent of mines
Khar	Torn
Khariboli	Spoken Hindi; form of Hindi
Kharif	Monsoon crop
Khatile	Preacher
Khelat	Dress of honour
Khesari	Chickling-vetch (lathyrus sativus)
Khidmatgār	One of low caste rendering menial services
Khodārā	For God's sake
Khudāwand	Lord; Master
Khusi	Happiness, happy
Khutba	Sermon
Khutkatti	Kind of tenure by which village was jointly held by descendants of founders
Khwājā Khijir Khaja Khider	Patron god of the boatman caste in Bihar
Kitābkhāna	Library
Kotwāl	Officer in charge of police administration
Kṛshnaism	Earliest style of Arabic writing generally without dots
Krishṇaism	Worship of Krishṇa as the supreme deity
Kufic	Earliest style of Arabic writing generally without dots
Kul	Family
Kulāh	Cap
Kulin	Of noble and respectable descent
Kundala	Large ear-ring
Kurukh	Language spoken by Oraons

L

Lal	Ruby
Latiya	A cap
Laya	Bhumij village-priest
Linga	Phallus, symbol, gender
Litchi	North-Indian fruit, (Nephelium Litchi)

M

Māarfat	Gnosis; through
Madad	Help
Madrasa	Muslim primary school; school
Madya	Wine
Māgadhi	The Prākrit language (believed to have been current in Eastern India) which low castes use in Sanskrit dramas
Magan	Happy

Majini	Betrothal
Mahā	A cult festival
Mahājan	Money-lender; good people
Mahāmātra	Class of highly-placed officers in Maurya Administration
Mahāmudra	Particular posture or position of hands or feet (in the practice of yoga)
Mahāraja	Kubera
Mahārājādhirāj	A great king
Mahārāstri	Standard Prākrit language which was mainly used in verse
Mahāśāla	One having a large residence; epithet applied to a class of learned Brāhmaṇas who maintained the sacrificial fire
Mahāsethi	President of a guild
Mahāsthān	Shrine dedicated to Vishnu
Mahishi	First or consecrated wife of a king; queen consort
Maithuna	Sexual intercourse
Majlis	Religious gathering
Majnun	A traditional lover, the beloved of Leila
Majrā	Story
Mazule	Distracted
Makara	Imaginary sea-monster resembling a crocodile; familiar motif in architecture and sculpture
Maktubats	Epistles
Malfoozat (malfuzāts)	Recorded utterances and table-talk (of Muslim saints); sayings
Maliks	Chiefs; nobles
Mal-i-Muzakkā	Rightfully earned money
Malik-us-Sharq	Lord of the East
Malto	Language of the Saoria Paharia of Santhal Parganas
Manda Jāti	Depressed class
Mandal	Head of Caste Pañchāyat in North Bihar
Mandalika	Fief holder
Mancsa	Forefathers
Mangala	Auspicious ceremony; domestic festivities and rituals
Mangala-poems	Narrative poems in middle Bengali eulogizing gods and goddesses, like Dharmā, Mansa, Chandi etc
Manjhi	Village headman among the Paharias or Santhals; vice-president of lower caste Pañchāyat
Manki	Leader of group of villages among Hos and Mundas
Māṅsa	Meat
Maṅtra	Sacred text or speech; prayer or song of praise used for meditation
Mānus-śilpa	Human crafts
Maṅzil	Abode; a stage to be reached
Maqtab	Muslim primary school
Margi	Classical music
Mariam Rozā	Fast on 15th of Rajab
Masjid	Mosque
Masnad	Throne; also an elevated place of distinction in the Darbar, covered with a cloth or carpet, for the prince to sit on
Matsya	Fish
Maulaṇa	Respectful prefix to the name of learned Muslims

Maulvi	Teachers of Arabic and Persian
Mauza	Village
Māyā	Illusory phenomenal world; illusion; the power of illusion
Mazāmir	Instrumental music
Mazār	Grave
Mazkoor	Mentioned
Mazruā	Cultivated
Meezān	Weight
Mekhalā	Ornament; girdle
Mewa	Dried fruit
Mijwah	Shirt used by unmarried girls
Mirzai	Jacket with full sleeves, fastening in front
Mita	Relation after whom child is named
Moāsh	Living
Mohallā	Quarter of a city
Mojāvirān	Mendicant who takes care of tombs
Moksha	Final beatitude
Mon-khmer	Language spoken in lower Burma and parts of Malaya
Moqarrar	Fixed; settled
Motasaddi	Worker
Mubāligha	Exaggeration
Muhtasib	Censor
Mukhtear	Legal petition-writer
Mukuta	Crown
Mūla	Village of a Maithil Brāhmaṇ family
Munda	Village headman
Mung	Green gram (phaseolus radiatus)
Munshi	Writer
Muqāmāt	Stages in a journey
Muqti	Chief, governor
Muraqibba	Meditation
Muraqqā	Carefully mended rags
Murchal	Kind of fan
Murshid	Guide
Mustagir	Lessee of land on certain conditions
Mutasarrif	Treasurer
Muwallah	Distracted in love
Muztar	Restless

N

Nāik (Nāek)	Leader, chief, general
Nafar	Attendant
Nafs	Self or ego
Naib	Deputy
Nālain	Shoes
Nālaindoz	Shoemaker
'Na Mānā Jeo inhā na ratnā buā'	'The self did not agree to live here'
Nāpat	Barber woman
Naqsh	Charm or talisman
Narkat	Reed
Nashad	Unhappy

Naskh	A kind of Arabic character
Nastāliq	A style of Persian writing
Natti	Dancing girl; whore
Nazar	Sight; offering
Nazarāna	Present, or amount given to Government as acknowledgement of grant of land or office
Nihālcha	Coverlet
Nirguna	Without any attribute
Nirvāsita	Excluded ones
Nishān	Order of the Royal Prince
Nizāmat	Office or jurisdiction of Nazim or viceroy of province; administration of criminal justice
Noke	Edge
Nopur (nupur)	Ring worn on toe or bangle on ankle

O

Ojha or Mati	Diviner or ghost-doctor.
Om	An invocation to God; mystic sound-symbol of the Supreme Deity consisting of A-U-M

P

Pahan	Priest
Pahārias	A hill-tribe
Pairāhan (or Pahiraon)	Piece of dress, loose skirt
Paiśāc (h) i	Lost Prākrit language in which the original one lakh verses of Kathāsaritsāgar by Gunadhya were written
Pākān	Pure ones
Pālki	Palanquin
Pān	Betel leaf
Panahi	Shoes
Panchagavya	Five products of the cow (urine, dung, curd, milk and ghee) used for ceremonial purification
Pandits	Learned men, teachers of Sanskrit and allied vernaculars
Panjikar	Keeper of genealogical records
Pāramitā	Perfection of moral virtues associated with the Bodhisattvas as stages in their progress towards Buddhahood
Pardā	Curtain; veil
Pardahdor	Tailors; patchers
Pardesh	Foreign land
Parganā (pergana)	Administrative division
Parganādār	Officer in charge of parganā
Parganāit	Head of group of villages in Santhali areas
Paria	Tribal women's ceremonial dress
Parvāne	Moth
Parwānā	Order; permit
Pāshaṇda	Sect, generally of heterodox denomination
Pātān	Leaves
Pats	Small but high isolated plateaus in western and southern Palamau
Pattar (patra)	Leaf
Pedar	Father
Peer	Spiritual guide

Pekkham	Dramatic show
Peon	Attendant; a messenger
Peshwāz	Gown worn on ceremonial occasions
Phandā	Net; snare
Phulhar	Drizzle, spray
Pingala	Supposed author of the Chhandas, a treatise on metre regarded as one of the Vedāngas
Pippala	The sacred Fig tree (Ficus Religiosa)
Poidā (Paidā)	Born
Poochho ho	Ask
Pothi	Sacred book or literature
Prachāraks	Preachers
Prādeśika	High administrative officer in Mauryan state
Prākāra	City wall; palisade
Prākrit	'Natural' as opposed to Sanskrit which means cultured, Prākrit is the name given to the language of the common man prevalent in the post-Sanskritic period
Prameya	Thing to be proved; measurable; provable
Prānāvām	Regulation of breath in yogic exercises
Prāsāda	Royal palace; religious shrine
Pratusha (pratyusha)	Dawn
Pravrajyā	Going forth from home (first rite of layman wishing to become a Buddhist monk)
Pukārā	Called
Pura (puri)	Town
Purāna	Word for punched coins used in Kushāna period when they were no longer minted but still in circulation
Purdāh	Veil; seclusion
Purodāśa	Vedic sacrificial offerings
Purohita	Priest; family-priest
Purushamedha	Human sacrifice
Pus	Unit of villages among Hos and Mundas
Pyne	Small irrigation canal

Q

Qaba	Long gown, shorter and tighter than Abā or Jubbah
Qalansuwah	Kind of cap
Qalicha	Small carpet
Qanāti	Roofless
Qarār pāyā	Settled; decided
Qāzi	Judge

R

Rabi	Spring crop
Rāh	Way
Rait (Ryot)	Tenants; actual cultivator
Ras	Taste, essence, sentiment
Ratyān	Night
Ravindgān	Travellers
Rawaqs	Balcony
Razāi	Quilt

Rekhta	Persian word meaning 'scattered' or 'mixed'; early name of Urdu
Ridā	Cloak or mantle
Roza Tai	Continuous fast
Rudrāksha	Elaeocarpus Ganitrus or its berry (used for rosaries)
Rupa	Symbol punched on coin; form

S

Sabai	A perennial grass (ischaemum Augustifolium)
Sabdavidyā	Science of sounds or words and their meaning
Sabhā	Assembly-hall; body of learned men to advise king
Sadar	President of lower caste Pañchāyat
Sadari (Sadani or Gawanri)	Mixture of Bhojpuri, Maghi, and certain tribal languages widely spoken in Chotanagpur
Sādhaka	Worshipper; aspirant
Sādhana	Spiritual discipline
Sādhubhāsa	Traditional style of literary Bengali
Sadri	Vest
Safar	Journey
Saguna	With attributes
Sahasrikā	Third Buddhist council, so called from the number of participating monks which was 1,000
Sahnak	Plate
Śahndia	School of Sufi theology the basic conception of which is that everything derives from Him and nothing exists independently of Him
Śaikh	Spiritual guide
Saje	Bead
Śākhās	Branches; sections
Sāl	Kind of timber indigenous to Bihar
Sālik	Traveller
Sal tamam	Full year
Śaluka	Jacket
Sāma (Veda)	Recital of vedic mantras in cadence
Śamā	Traditional oil lamp
Samāchāri	Rules for ascetics
Samādhi	Spiritual ecstasy attained by meditation and concentration
Samāja	Social gatherings organised for recreation
Samavāya	Concord; amity; religious harmony
Samaya	Buddha's teaching or doctrine
Samoth	Caste assembly of Brāhmaņs
Samsāra	Cycle of existence
Sanad	'A grant or charter or patent from any person or persons in authority'
Sangam	Confluence of two or more rivers
Śangarf	Vermilion
Sañgha	Republican state; Buddhist assembly; the Buddhist fraternity
Sañgiti	Buddhist council for rehearsal of the canon
Sannyāsi (Sinnasee)	One who has wholly renounced; religious mendicant
Saṁskāra	Prescribed religious ceremony; impression

Sapinda	Belonging to same 'pinda' or blood, of the same partilinear group
Sapta Lok	Seven worlds
Sāqi-i-khās	Special cup-bearer
Sārthavāha	Caravan trader
Sarawil	Piece of dress; loose drawers like shalwar
Sardār	Chief or commander; chief of recognised division of village community among the Paharias
Sāri	Main part of a woman's dress in India, wrapped round the body and thrown over head or shoulders
Sāri-i-Dāwat-Dar	Chief keeper of Imperial pen case
Sarkār	Administrative division of a territory during Muslim rule corresponding roughly to a Division under British rule
Sarnā	Sacred place of worship in a tribal village, also seat of deities
Sasan	Burial ground of the original settlers of a tribal village
Śāsana-dāyāda	Heir to Buddha's doctrine; an epithet for Aśoka
Śāstra	Religious literature embodying rules and regulations
Śāstrakāra-parīkshā	Synod of learned men at Pataliputra whch conducted proficiency tests for scholars
Sat	Truth
Sattasatikā	Second Buddhist council, so named from the number of participating monks which was 700
Śātir	Mystic who had broken all worldly ties
Śati	Walking quickly
Śaulka-śālika	Revenue from customs
Sauraseni	The Prākrit language (believed to have been current in the Vraj area) showing considerable influence of Sanskrit
Śatranj	Chess
Śav Sādhan	Tāntric ritual involving use of a corpse
Sayurgal (Suvurghāl)	Charity land; form of rent-free grants made by Mughal emperors
Sazawal	Divisional superintendent in charge of tracts inhabited by hillmen or Santhals
Sethi	Member of merchant guild
Shia	Literally a party; sect of Muslims
Siddhi	Achievement; attainment of occult powers
Siddha	Saintly or holy man who has attained the eight Siddhies, completed, perfect
Śikār	Game
Śilpa	Arts and crafts
Śilpsthānvidyā	Skill in arts; mechanical or manual skill
Silsia	Sufi orders
Sindoor	Vermilion
Sing Bonga	The Supreme Being of Munda, Ho, Birhor, and other tribes
Sipah-salār	Commander-in-chief
Siqdār	Executive officer in a parganā
Sir	Garlic
Śirni	Sweetmeats
Śisam	Kind of timber
Sittars	Religious people in Tamilnad

Siyum	Third day
Smṛiti	Remembrance; whole body of Hindu sacred tradition
Sohāgin	Married woman whose husband is alive
Sohāni	Mellow and charming
Sohrai	Festival at which cattle are worshipped by Adivasis
Śraddhā	Faith; trust
Śrāddha	Cer. mony in honour of and for benefit of dead relatives
Śramaṇa	Belonging to any order of monks, a Buddhist monk
Śreṇi	Guild of artisans
Śri	Respectful form of address
Śringār	Literally beautifying toilet; sentiment of love
Śrotriya	Brāhmaṇa versed in the Veda
Srivatsa	Name of Vishṇu; particular mark or curl of the hair on breast of Vishṇu or Kṛishṇa (and of other divine beings; said to be white and represented in pictures by symbol of a cruciform flower)
Sthālipāka	Oblations cooked on the domestic fire
Sthāna	Religious shrine in the form of a platform
Stūpa	Buddhist monument (generally pyramidal or dome-like and erected over sacred relics of the Great Buddha or on spots consecrated as the scenes of his acts)
Subā	Province of the Mughal empire
Sufi	One who is used to austere ways of life; Muslim mystic or saint
Sufra	Table cloth
Śulkaśalā	Custom house
Suni	Lonely
Supāri	Areca nut
Suraj Mookhi	A flower of that name
Surbarekar	Managing Agent
Surhil	Spring festival of the Adivasis
Surmā	Collyrium
Sūtra (Compositions)	Aphoristic writings
Śwetāmbar	Name of one of the two great Jaina sects, the other is Digambar

T

Tadbhava	Words of Sanskritic origin which have undergone structural change while entering other Indian languages
Tadbir	Means; method; ways; action
Tajarrud	Celibacy
Takhtposh	Coverlet
Tāl	Musical beats; rhythm
Talab mat Karo	Do not ask for
Talibāne yār	Those who yearn for the beloved
Tan	Body
Tāntrik	Followers of the doctrine of Tantras, the scripture of Śāktas
Tanwe	Oven
Tāpasi	A lady who practises austerities
Tāq	Niche
Tāqia	Kind of cap
Tarafs	Portions of estates

Tārapatra	Palm leaves prepared for writing
Tariqat	Mystic way
Tasht	Large basin
Tawiz	Talisman
Tazkira	Recital of divine names; religious discourse
Teli	Oilman
Thala-niryāmaka	Pilots who guide caravans
Thānā	Police Station
Theravadin	Monk of the ancient or original Buddhist church, who was therefore called an Elder
Thulth	Style of writing with three decorative features
Tikā	Commentary
Tilaka	Mark on the forehead (made with coloured earth, sandal-wood, either as ornament or sectarian distinction)
Tippani	Small note; commentary
Tirthankar	Jaina saint; perfected man
Titthiya	Follower of heterodox philosophy
Tor	Net covering women's palanquin
Toraṇa	Gateway with elaborate pillars and architraves
Tretā	The second yuga (or silver age)
Trisula	Trident; Shiva's weapon
Tughra	Very ornamental Arabic writing
Tukma	Button or fastening
Turushka	Turks
Turushka kā Danda	Tax levied in early medieval India to meet the Turkish menace

U

Ugaldān	Spitoon
Ulema	Clergy; learned and pious man
Upanayana	Ceremony in which a Guru draws a boy towards him and initiates him and gives him the sacred thread
Upasampadā	Receiving into the order of monks
Uposatha	Fortnightly congregation in the Buddhist Saṅgha
Uptan	Paste for smearing on the body
Urdhvavastra	Garment which could be put on or off over the head
Urid	Black gram (Phaseolus Mungo)
Urs	Death anniversaries of saints

V

Vāhan	Conveyance; vehicle
Veshya	Prostitute
Vakil	Attorney; agent; representative; ambassador 'sent' on special commission or residing at a court
Vārisa	Branch; line; descent
Varṇa	Class; colour
Varṇamālā	Order or series of letters; the alphabet
Varṇasankar	Indiscriminate mixture of castes
Vasnaya	Trader carrying cash sale proceeds of his goods
Vata	Banyan tree
Vataśuddhikā	Followers of religious folk-cults
Vatthuvijjāchariya	Civil architect; town planner

Vedikā	Railing consisting of upright pillars and cross-bars, built round sacred trees or stūpas
Veerāne	Waste land
Veśa	Courtesans' quarters
Vibhajjāvādin	Epithet for the Theravādin monks
'Vibhuti-yoga'	Theistic doctrine which regards subsidiary divinities as manifestations of Vishṇu
Vihar	Monastery; a place for joy
Vivāha	Marriage
Vrātya	Aryans who had refused to go through accepted rites and ceremonies

W

Wāhabi	Puritanical sect of Muslims originally from Arabia of the 18th century
Wāhdat	Oneness of God
Wajee	For
Wajudia	School of Sufi thought which believes in absolute unity expressed by the saying, 'Everything is Him, whatever exists is God'
Wali	Holy man
Waqif	Knowing; expert
Wasl	Meeting
Wisāl	Union

Y

Yajna	Sacrifice
Yakshini	Nymph; demi-goddess
Yāro	Oh, Friends
Yātrā	Fair held at a shrine in honour of its presiding deity
Yogi	One who practises yoga
Yojana	Measure of distance, about eight or nine English miles
Yukta	Combined; united; joined, proper

Z

Zabān	Tongue
Zhinda	Patched garment
Zikr	Religious discourse
Zindagāni	Life; worldly existence
Zore Se	Briskly
Zuhd	Piety

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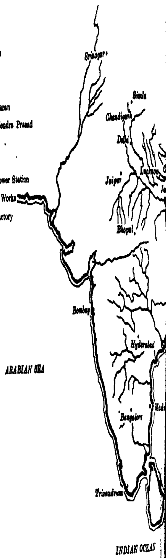
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